STREET SPIRIT

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JUSTICE NEWS & HOMELESS BLUES IN THE BAY AREA

A Quaker's Ceaseless Quest for a World Without War

by Terry Messman

During a long lifetime spent working for peace and social justice, David Hartsough has shown an uncanny instinct for being in the right place at the right time. One can almost trace the modern history of nonviolent movements in America by following the trail of his acts of resistance over the past 60 years.

His life has been an unbroken series of sit-ins for civil rights, seagoing blockades of munitions ships sailing for Vietnam, land blockades of trains carrying bombs to El Salvador, arrests at the Diablo nuclear reactor and the Livermore nuclear weapons lab, Occupy movement marches, and international acts of peacemaking in Russia, Nicaragua, Kosovo, Iran and Palestine.

It all began at the very dawn of the Freedom Movement when the teenaged Hartsough met Martin Luther King and Ralph David Abernathy at a church in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1956 as the ministers were organizing the bus boycott at the birth of the civil rights struggle.

Next, while at Howard University, Hartsough was involved in some of the first sit-ins to integrate restaurants in Arlington, Virginia — white-hot confrontations that were violently attacked by white supremacists and the American Nazi Party.

Just as Hartsough was present at Dr. King's first campaign in Alabama, he also was arrested for taking part in the slain civil rights leader's very last campaign, the Poor People's Campaign in 1968.

During the Vietnam War, Hartsough helped organize a seagoing Peace Blockade that gained international attention after activists in small boats sailed directly into the path of the USS Nitro. When seven sailors jumped overboard to join the peace flotilla's resistance to the Vietnam War, it made headlines across the country.

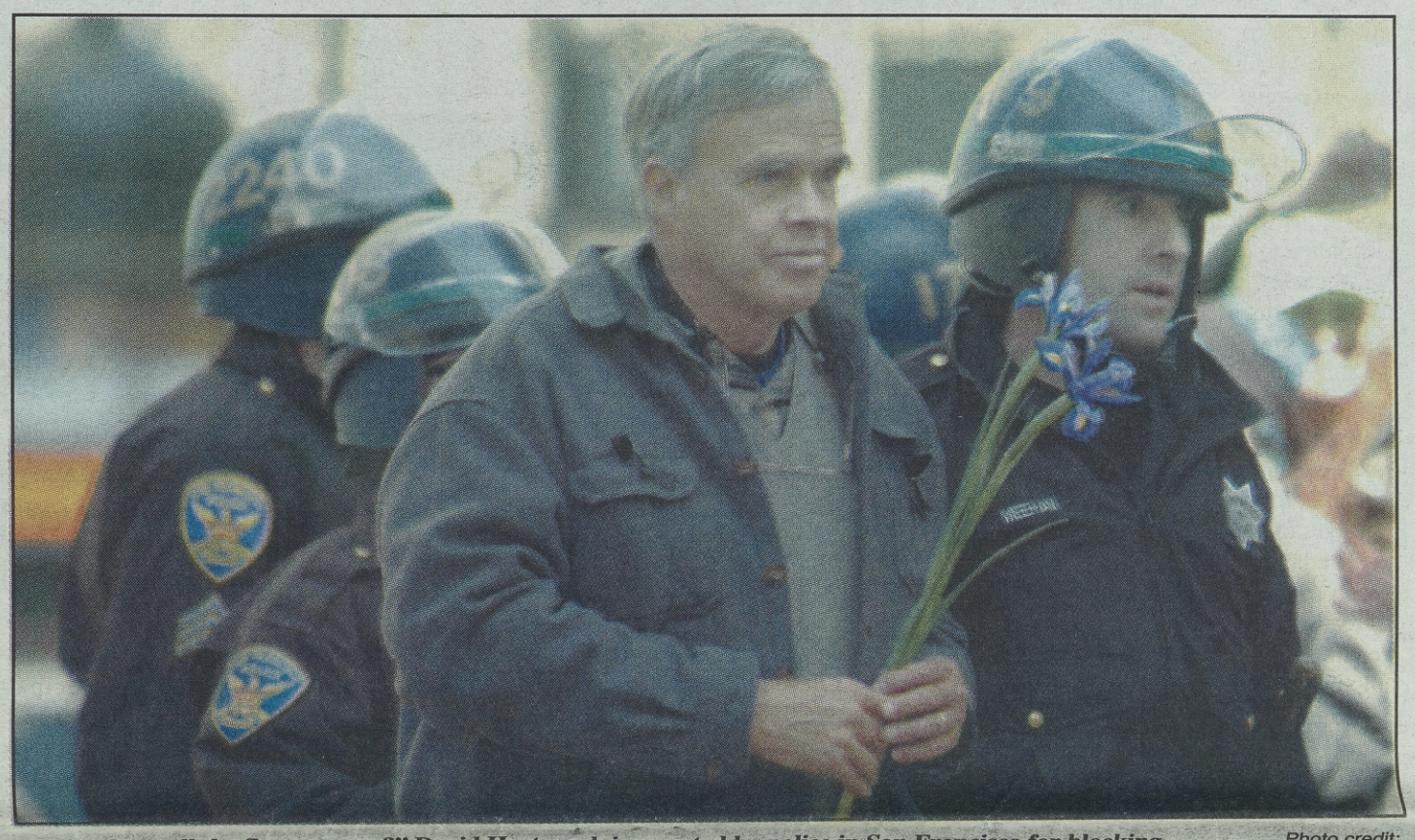
He was standing right next to his friend Brian Willson during a blockade of weapons shipments to Central America, when a munitions train ran over Willson, severing his legs and fracturing his skull.

Two months later, in November 1987, Concord police broke Hartsough's arm while violently removing him from those same tracks where he was blocking a train.

Hartsough also was arrested in one of the most momentous anti-nuclear actions in our nation's history, the blockade of the Diablo Canyon nuclear reactor. When the anti-nuclear power movement evolved into a movement against nuclear weapons, he was arrested repeatedly at Livermore Lab.

During a massive uprising in Kosovo, he was arrested for conducting nonviolent trainings, and the jailing of U.S. activists

See **Quaker's Quest for A World** *page 6*



***"Where have all the flowers gone?" David Hartsough is arrested by police in San Francisco for blocking* Market Street in an act of civil disobedience in resistance to the U.S. invasion of Iraq.** Photo credit: Karl Mondon

Young Artists Take a Stand for Prisoners' Rights

"Here at Youth Spirit Artworks, I'm trying to incorporate what I think freedom means in my art, as well as trying to spread the awareness of how people are taking others' freedom away." — Julia Tello, Youth Spirit Artworks

by Lydia Gans

This autumn, Californians will have the opportunity to vote for a ballot proposition that promises to bring a degree of fairness to the criminal justice system. Proposition 47, Reduced Penalties for Some Crimes Initiative, would reduce the penalties for most nonviolent crimes from felonies to misdemeanors.

Furthermore, the significant amount of money that would be saved by keeping many minor offenders out of prison is designated for mental health and substance abuse treatment, for programs to help young people most at risk of dropping out of school, and for services for victims of crime.

Among the crimes that would be sentenced as misdemeanors instead of felonies are drug possession, shoplifting and petty theft no greater than $950. It is these crimes that are currently keeping inordinately large numbers of poor and minority people incarcerated, and, when they are released, stigmatizing them with a felony record that makes them permanently disadvantaged in seeking a decent living.

Passage of Proposition 47 can make a significant difference in their lives. The importance of this speaks to at-risk youth in our own community. Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA) is an interfaith art training program dedicated to empowering and providing job training to homeless and low-income young people, ages 16 to 25.

YSA is located in a large studio space on Alcatraz Avenue in Berkeley. Here the young people create art that they can sell, for example the individually designed tote bags they're currently selling at Berkeley Bowl. They also create art for the community, including some beautiful murals. From time to time, the young artists have exhibits in local venues.

It is through their art that many of the

See **Youth Spirit Artworks** *page 16*

Young artists Alasia Ayler, Brianna Pierce and Vernon Neely display their artistic statement: "You ain't gotta be in jail to be doing time." Lydia Gans photo

West Grand Hotel Sued by City of Oakland

"This is the worst housing condition I have ever encountered in my practice, and the level of tenant abuse is obscene. I commend the City of Oakland for taking this place down."

— Oakland attorney Andrew Wolff

The West Grand Hotel has been sued by the Oakland City Attorney for slum conditions and dangerous code violations.

by Lynda Carson

Oakland City Attorney Barbara Parker filed a lawsuit against the West Grand Hotel due to "unsafe, inhumane living conditions." The hotel, located at 641 W. Grand Avenue in Oakland, is a single room occupancy (SRO) hotel, primarily for low-income and disabled tenants

The West Grand Hotel is owned by Oakland JMO LLC, a Georgia company not licensed to do business in California, according to the Oakland City Attorney.

According to the Oakland City Attorney, the lawsuit filed in Alameda County Superior Court on August 4 asked the court to declare the West Grand Hotel a public nuisance and to shut it down for a one-year period. The suit also seeks damages for years of unpaid Rent Program service fees and asks for substantial civil penalties and damages from the owners.

The lawsuit asks the court to appoint a receiver to take control of the hotel, relocate the tenants and make necessary repairs, with the owners responsible for all costs. The lawsuit also asks the court to order the owners to live at the West Grand Hotel until the nuisance is abated.

The lawsuit was filed against the West Grand Hotel and its owners for failing to abate building code violations, failure to pay rent program service fees, violation of hotel, motel, and rooming house operating standards, violation of hotel rates and registration requirements. In addition, the City of Oakland charges that the hotel is a drug nuisance in the neighborhood.

In essence, the City of Oakland is alleging that the owners of the hotel are slumlords, and some of the residents and their friends at the hotel are involved in drug-related activities.

The suit describes extremely hazardous and filthy conditions at the hotel and "extensive violation of numerous fire and building codes." Also, the suit charges the hotel owners and managers with allowing heroin, cocaine and other illegal drugs to be sold in and around the hotel.

As of 7:35 p.m. on August 11, the phone number for the hotel was no longer in service. No one was available for comment. The West Grand Hotel was still occupied on August 12, and tenants could be seen coming and going from the hotel, and a man could be seen sitting at the front desk. However, a sign in the front of the building said "No Visitors," and the front door was locked.

Oakland Attorney Andrew Wolff has clients at the hotel and said: "This is the worst housing condition I have ever encountered in my practice, and the level of tenant abuse is obscene. I commend the City of Oakland for taking this place down."

Wolff added, "I have clients at the hotel and we intend to prosecute our case to the fullest extent of the law against the owners. I hope the city settles with these people so they not only pay a fine, and relocate the tenants, but also agree not to own rental property in Oakland again."

Omid Razi, Richard Spitler and Mi Hwa Spitler also were named in the lawsuit as defendants. According to the suit, the City of Oakland believes that Oakland JMO LLC, Omid Razi, Richard Spitler and Mi Hwa Spitler own or manage the West Grand Hotel.

Omid Razi has a personal injury law office in Beverly Hills called the Razi Law Group. Numerous websites list Richard Spitler as the manager of the hotel, and according to Advanced Back Ground Checks, Mi Hwa Spitler resides in San Leandro, and is also known as Mi Pitler.

Also, the lawsuit charges that the company that owns the West Grand Hotel, Oakland JMO LLC, is a corporation organized in the State of Georgia, and is currently not in good standing, and is not licensed to do business in California.

According to the Oakland City Attorney: "For years, the West Grand Hotel at 641 West Grand Avenue has been a nuisance to the neighborhood and a danger to the dozens of people who live there. The property has long been a center of drug activity, including sales, storage and distribution of cocaine and heroin. Since April 2013, Oakland police have arrested at least 23 people for drug sales and other drug crimes connected to the property, and officers have recovered firearms and large amounts of drugs packaged for sale inside the building."

There is no mention in the lawsuit that the owners or managers of the hotel have been arrested for allowing the alleged criminal activity to occur on their property at the hotel.

It appears that the poor people residing at the hotel are being demonized by the City of Oakland, and are being displaced from their housing, and possibly from West Oakland — which the City and wealthy developers want to gentrify under the West Oakland Specific Plan (WOSP).

At the time the lawsuit was filed against the West Grand Hotel, the City of Oakland simply claimed that dozens of people lived there as tenants or occupants, but there is no mention in the lawsuit as to how many tenants they are actually talking about. Nor does the lawsuit mention how many rooms are in the single room occupancy hotel, where people share bathrooms throughout the building.

According to knowledgeable sources, the occupants of the hotel have been residing in dangerous, slum-like conditions, and the lawsuit alleges that there are numerous code violations throughout the building.

Oakland JMO LLC was incorporated in Georgia in May 24, 2012, only two weeks before the company bought the West Grand. However, the principal address for the corporation is 8383 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 450, in Beverly Hills. The Razi Law Group's main office is located at 8383 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 610, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. The firm also has office locations in Carlsbad, Sacramento, Palo Alto, San Francisco, San Jose, and in Oakland at 1300 Clay Street, Suite 600.

Attorney Andrew Wolff can be reached at 510/834-3300.

Lynda Carson may be reached at tenantsrule@yahoo.com

The Homeless

by Claire J. Baker

might not slip through
the social and
economic safety net
if the net didn't have
so many invisible
holes. Or the net was
not made so flimsy
from the Get-Go!

BANG! BOOM!

by Claire J. Baker

Having served & survived
a country's premeditated war —
(legalized murder & mayhem)
survivors may face:
PTSD,
divorce papers,
a dissolved family,
loss of limb(s) or mind;
social maladjustment,
survival guilt —
all post-war tickets
for the embattled land
of homelessness where
no one wins, because
to survive takes
special skills for which
one is not trained.

Good people,
where are we going
with war after war
after war?

I Like Blight

by Carol Denney

I like blight
where the rent is low
where the music's hot
and the street's a show
and you can't predict
any page you turn
and the shadows cry
and the echoes burn
and the kids run wild
and the trains go by
and there is no style
and the papers fly
and you can't be seen
'cause it's so intense
and it's hard to love
but it all makes sense
and the pressure's fierce
'cause they want that juice
but it's all on fire
and it won't kick loose
and it can't be bought
and it can't be sold
and it's all it's got
and it's never old
I love blight
'cause they walk right by
not a thing to see
not a thing to buy
no appointments here
no lunch at two
'cause it's cheap and rough
and black and blue
and they walk real fast
with their bags clutched tight
and their keys held hard
in the bright blue light

and it all makes sense
as the moon goes numb
they're ashamed they went
but they all took some
and it was so good
and it was so right
and it was so wrong
on a perfect night
and they don't look back
'cause they might get caught
in the undertow
of perfumed rot
and love and death
and hate and heart
and steam and spit
and fire and art

United Nations Committee Condemns the Criminalization of Homelessness in the U.S.

The art of Art Hazelwood reminds us that homeless people have human rights, yet their constitutional rights are constantly violated by political officials and the police.

by Jeremy Rosen, NLCHP

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Geneva today stated it is "concerned at the high number of homeless persons, who are disproportionately from racial and ethnic minorities ... and at the criminalization of homelessness through laws that prohibit activities such as loitering, camping, begging, and lying in public spaces."

The U.N. Committee called upon the U.S. government to take corrective action. The Committee further included criminalization of homelessness in a short list of topics it wants the United States to "provide detailed information in its next periodic report on concrete measures taken to implement these recommendations." The U.S. government's next report is due in 2017.

The U.N. Committee's statement is part of its Concluding Recommendations, following a two-day review of U.S. government compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, a treaty ratified by the U.S. government in 1994.

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (NLCHP), which had submitted a report to the U.N. Committee as part of the review process, applauded the Committee's findings.

"Criminally punishing people simply for having no legal place continues to put the U.S. on the wrong foot on the international stage," said Maria Foscarinis, NLCHP Executive Director.

The organization issued a major report on the criminalization of homelessness in July, and litigates to challenge the practice. "We welcome the Committee's Concluding Observations and call on our government to take swift action to solve homelessness with homes, not jails and prisons."

Jeremy Rosen, Director of Advocacy at NLCHP, was in Geneva for the hearings and stated, "The Committee's review also addressed the broader criminalization of race, highlighted by recent protests in Ferguson, Missouri, around the killing of Michael Brown. Because homelessness disparately affects racial minorities, and because homeless persons are often more visible on the streets, this often compounds their profiling and ill-treatment by police. Until the U.S. reduces racial disparities in housing, we're going to continue to see them in criminal justice, and vice versa."

Echoing the recommendations of the U.N Human Rights Committee in March, the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination called on the U.S. to: "(a) Abolish laws and policies making homelessness a crime; (b) Ensure close cooperation among all relevant stakeholders, including social, health, law enforcement and justice professionals at all levels to intensify efforts to find solutions for the homeless in accordance with human rights standards; and (c) Offer incentives to decriminalize homelessness, including financial support to local authorities that implement alternatives to criminalization, and withdrawing funding from local authorities that criminalize homelessness."

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is a national organization providing legal and legislative advocacy, advocacy training, public education, and impact litigation.

A Republican's Sojourn on the Street

How much good does a roaring stock market do if you're living on the street and sleeping in a park? Ask Neel Kashkari, GOP candidate for governor.

by Carol Denney

Neel Kashkari, Republican candidate for governor, spent an impressive seven days sleeping on park benches and in parking lots trying and failing to find work in Fresno. After his fifth day on the streets, he concluded that all he needed was a job.

"I asked myself: What would solve my problems? Food stamps? Welfare? An increased minimum wage? No. I needed a job. Period." — Neel Kashkari, *Wall Street Journal,* July 31, 2014

Kashkari's sojourn illuminated a few issues for him, such as the short radius of job opportunities for people who need meals from a shelter, exactly how far $40 will take you, and how little good a roaring stock market does if you're on the street.

But Kashkari managed, at the other end of his experiment, to disturb not one of his free market, pro-growth, anti-regulation Republican principles, including cutting Social Security and Medicare, overturning the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare), weakening collective bargaining, as well as promoting fracking and off-short drilling for an oil-based economy, policies which may well be related to the drought currently drying up farm jobs in Fresno.

If he'd stuck with it a little longer, if he'd committed to six months or a year of job search, as most of us have had to do, or used his "free-market" Republican connections to insert himself into a low-paid retail position while looking for a "good" job, he would have learned a lot more.

He would have learned that the tattered safety net for which he has such disdain needs more, rather than less, funding. He would have learned that a large ratio of low-wage workers *need* that safety net and qualify for food stamps despite having a job, since their wages are so low and their rents are so high that they can't cover even minimal living expenses, which may have introduced him to different thoughts about rent control and the minimum wage.

Kashkari's personal wealth, at only around $5 million, is not impressive by Republican standards. But it does move him out of the arena most of us know well: the scramble just to stay ahead of bills and obligations, watching the sunset of dreams we once had for our communities, our children, and ourselves as our libraries and schools scud along with minimal funding, our after-school programs are put on hiatus, our arts institutions sadly compete against each other for dwindling support.

Let's respectfully applaud Kashkari's week on the streets of Fresno. Let's encourage him to donate at least one of his millions to the Poverello House shelter in Fresno. And let's encourage him to continue his experiment, so that his values have a more realistic opportunity to get some traction in a very real world.

Street Spirit

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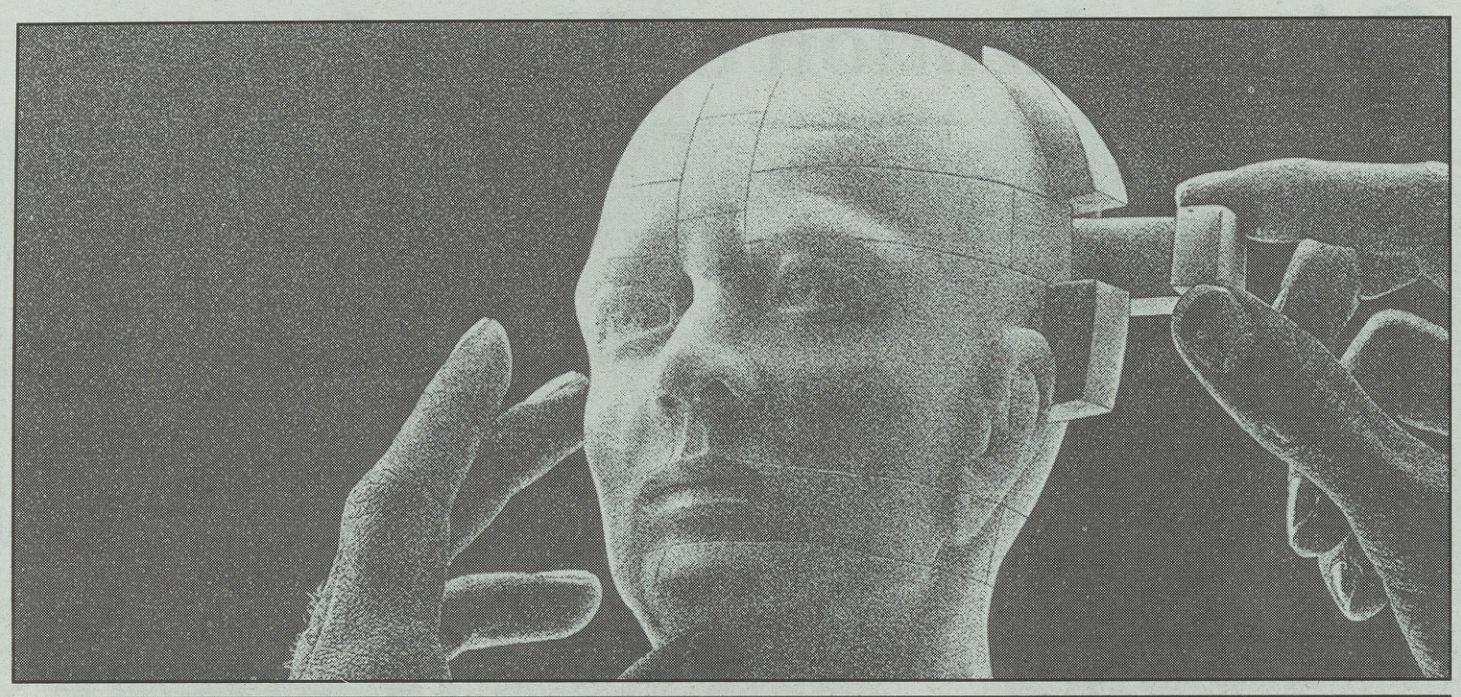
Predatory Psychotherapists from Outer Space

Science fiction by Jack Bragen



Janice Williams, the therapist, had been told to use an intelligence bobbing unit during the session. Janice's commander, who went by a number and not a name — Alpha Centauri aliens didn't use names — had ordered John's intelligence reduced.

The group of 25 or so mentally disabled people sat at a table in the lunchroom and ate pizza with great ardor. Some of them, probably without realizing it, grunted while eating. It was a Friday, and in another hour or so, during "talk therapy," half of the "clients" would doze off.

The lunchroom had childlike arts and crafts pinned to the walls, and on the long table was a large jug of water with orange slices — one of the counselors had decided to get fancy.

Jonathan Smith hated the therapy venue. He was an intelligent man and believed he was being treated as an idiot. And today was Jonathan's day for individual therapy. John had only a poor memory of the talk sessions and suspected he was being hypnotized.

Today, John's therapist probed more intently. The psychoanalyst had an agenda. Jonathan had been found to be too intelligent. Janice Williams, the therapist, had been told to use an intelligence bobbing unit during the session. Janice's commander, who went by a number and not a name — Alpha Centauri aliens didn't use names — had ordered John's intelligence reduced.

Jonathan lived with his elderly mother, and when he got home that day, she knew something was amiss.

"Why are you acting like a simpleton?" she asked. "You're supposed to be smart."

"My therapist did something to me." John's reply oddly didn't carry any emotion. And his manner was uncharacteristically zombie-like.

Jonathan's mother, Melissa, put an upright index finger in front of Jonathan's face. "Keep your eyes on this." She moved her finger back and forth, up and down, and in circles. Soon, her son was in hypnosis. "Do you remember who you are?" she asked him.

"I'm a mentally ill idiot, like the rest." He paused. He was perplexed. "Why am I an idiot now?"

"It is as I had feared. Your mental health specialists have an ulterior agenda." She sat back in her hard-backed chair in front of John, who was on the living room sofa. "I'm going to try to reactivate your higher functions, but now your intelligence must be kept hidden. Your life may depend on it."

Jonathan's deceased father had been an astronomer, and had passed away under mysterious circumstances. Since then, Melissa had been an avid reader on the subject of alien intelligence. At some point, she had abruptly stopped the activity and could not be made to talk about it.

Melissa said, "Tomorrow when you go back, keep that mouth shut. If they discover that your faculties have been restored, they will probably try something more drastic."

*****

Jonathan sat in the waiting room of the mental health clinic. The wall had a poster with a picture of a teddy bear wearing a clown hat. The caption read, "I just want to be taken seriously." Jonathan was offended every time he sat in the waiting room and saw the poster.

He picked up a magazine. At that point, Jonathan realized that the surveillance camera in the waiting room had swiveled to point at him.

The mental health building was a renovated, Victorian-era, two-story house. Cameras and microphones had been installed in all parts of it. Presumably, someone in an observation room somewhere was looking at all of the images from the cameras.

Jonathan tried to be nonchalant, and started reading an article in the magazine he held. He wondered why his psychiatrist hadn't yet called him in for his appointment. And then, the therapist, Janice Williams, stepped into the waiting room, flanked by two beefy male subordinates.

"Are you reading that article?" she asked.

Jonathan worried. He had shown intelligence by the mere act of reading a magazine. He replied, "I was just looking at the pictures." Jonathan put a finger up his nose and then showed Janice a space illustration in the magazine. He managed to grin stupidly.

Miss Williams spoke under her breath to her subordinates. "False alarm, you can go back." Janice and her two thugs exited the room.

Invaders from Alpha Centauri were smaller-framed than most humans, and wore suits that disguised them as human beings. They periodically needed to get out of their suits, as it was quite tedious to wear them, and their skin needed to be aired out. The mental health clinic had a basement, which had been built in the 1950s as a fallout shelter by the previous owners of the building. Mental health consumers were not permitted into the room.

Janice Williams was assistant director of Red Bird Mental Health Clinic. She also wasn't born on Planet Earth. When she shed herself of the suit intended to make her look like an earthling, she became a bony, grotesque, scaly creature who would be considered repulsive by a human, but to an Alpha Centauri resident would seem quite attractive.

Janice was oddly obsessed with Jonathan. She was determined that he not be successful in life, as it would set a bad precedent and it would affect her reputation as a great spoiler.

Janice sat in her office, a cramped room at the very top of the remodeled Victorian house. She cradled a cup of tea, which was universally appealing even while wearing the awkward suit that made her look like an earthling. Across from her sat Jonathan, and he seemed to be staring at her, studying her. Of course, he could not know.

"Tell me about your father," Janice said. It was a session of psychoanalysis, and it was useful for reducing intelligence. The areas of the brain that were activated when Jonathan worked to answer a question could be pinpointed and targeted with the equipment.

"My father is none of your business," Jonathan replied.

"It was merely a question. Are you being compliant with your medication?"

Jonathan began to escalate. "How dare you use intimidation as a part of psychotherapy?"

It was going well. In another few minutes, Janice would be justified in summoning a couple of her thugs to subdue the unruly mental health client.

But then Janice's pager made a sound. This particular pager could only receive messages sent by off-planet beings. She retrieved it from her waist and looked at the display. Law enforcement officials from Sirius were contacting her.

Janice said, "I have to take this call. We will have to continue tomorrow."

Jonathan replied, "Gladly. And can I get contact information of your supervisor?"

I'm tired of this smart-ass human beast, she thought. "I'll get that to you in our next meeting. This call is urgent. You can go home."

"Bye. I'll be looking for a lawyer." Jonathan stormed out of the office and walked out to his car. John looked at his wristwatch. It was five-thirty and the parking lot of the mental health clinic was vacant except for his vehicle.

When he was about to pull onto the street, a car whizzed past him at a good clip, and Jonathan barely hit his brakes on time. The vehicle blasted an extra loud horn. Jonathan turned his head and saw that the vehicle was turning around and was soon to be headed back toward him.

Without time to think, Jonathan pulled out of the driveway and onto the street. He steered in the direction of the oncoming car, expecting to pass it on the right. The driver of that vehicle decided to play "chicken" and got in a direct path toward Jonathan. In a rush of rage, Jonathan punched his accelerator, realizing also that his vehicle was bigger, for a moment not caring that this action would probably put him in legal jeopardy.

Jonathan floored the gas pedal and accelerated toward the harassing vehicle.

The oncoming car, at the last moment, swerved, barely missing Jonathan, and it collided with a telephone pole. Jonathan briskly proceeded home, and didn't bother to phone police about the incident. He assumed that his attackers would not want police attention, either.

The following day at the mental health treatment center, Jonathan waited an extra long time in the parking lot, with his car idling, so that he could park his car where it would be visible through the large glass front window of the clinic. John was in a more alerted mode, one that had the potential of snowballing into full paranoia.

There were no police coming to get Jonathan. He concluded that his would-be attackers of the previous day were not going to try filing a false report. The telephone pole that had been hit had a moderate-sized chunk of wood missing, and now stood with a bit of a slant.

Janice did not immediately call Jonathan into her office. The interstellar law enforcement aliens from Sirius had issued her a warning. She put in a phone call to cancel usage of the thugs whom she had sent after Jonathan. She hoped the aliens from Sirius would not find her actions too improper.

Jonathan was unsure of whether he would get more hard-knuckle handling from staff, but felt that he needed to prove that he wasn't trying to evade treatment. Mental health law as well as the structure of the mental health system took a dim view on "noncompliance."

He hadn't yet looked for a lawyer but intended to do so. The day was oddly uneventful, and Jonathan relaxed a little bit.

***

Janice had a meeting with the representative from Sirius, and it had to be done on an invisible spacecraft in orbit. Sirius aliens, due to their form being radically different from earthlings, could not be disguised as human. The conversation went like this:

"My understanding is that Earth resources and Earth beasts were categorized as permissible to harvest," said Janice, the Alpha Centauri alien. "The Jonathan beast is creating too much inconvenience. We should be allowed to bob his intelligence like the rest."

The representative from Sirius said, "We've looked at the data from Jonathan, and we think he might be usable to us instead. He appears to have a good mind, and we might want to put that to our usage, or at least breed him."

Janice replied, "We could take a sperm sample." She paused. "Isn't he more of a threat than he is worth?"

The Sirius representative said, "If too much docility is bred into the species you stand the risk of creatures that won't be able to pick up a spoon to even feed themselves."

"That still doesn't eliminate getting a sperm sample and being rid of him."

"Doing that would be illegal if you take the circumstances into account. Policy dictates that someone of Jonathan's characteristics must be allowed to continue."

The Alpha Centaurian said, "Do not repeat this to anyone: I intend to deal with this man." Janice's tone was quite threat-

See **Predatory Psychotherapists** *page 5*

Gimme Shelter!

by Steve Pleich

"Oh, a storm is threat'ning
My very life today
If I don't get some shelter
Oh yeah, I'm gonna fade away."
— Mick Jagger-Keith Richards

A homeless man sleeps on the sidewalk in Santa Cruz. Almost no thought is being given to all those left without shelter.

According to the 2013 Homeless Census and Survey, there are approximately 3,500 men, women and children unsheltered in Santa Cruz County every night. That number is openly acknowledged by the census takers themselves to be underestimated by as much as 50 percent! Yet, in the entire county there are fewer than 700 shelter beds available.

Beginning at the federal level and affecting almost every effort to support people experiencing homelessness, the "housing first" model has become the mantra for the new "best practices" approach to creating positive outcomes for the homeless community.

Notwithstanding my belief that the best practices approach is simply lazy arithmetic when applied to a homeless population that is widely divergent in so many respects, I have serious questions about whether "housing first" is the best, most practicable option. I think it is not and I'll tell you why.

In Santa Cruz, we have an institutional group wrestling with a best practices-based program called "Smart Solutions" to homelessness. This group, which includes civic leaders, faith community members, local homeless services agency representatives and large nonprofit public benefit organization stakeholders, is advocating for a "housing first" model as an answer to the challenge of sheltering our many unhoused residents.

However, in my view, this approach is impractical in that it all but ignores the present reality of our local housing market and, worst of all, is seemingly heedless to the size, character and complexity of our local homeless community.

According to the 2013 Homeless Census and Survey, there are approximately 3,500 men, women and children unsheltered in Santa Cruz County every night. As an aside, that number is openly acknowledged by the census takers themselves to be underestimated by as much as 50 percent!

Yet, in the entire county there are fewer than 700 emergency shelter beds available — and of these, less than 200 can be accurately described as "emergency" short-term shelter spaces.

In this landscape, advocating for housing first while ignoring the vast, crushing need for simple, safe shelter space is like advocating for a "rehabilitation first" model for those suffering from drug addiction in the absence of any existing programs for that purpose.

Simply leaving the most vulnerable to their own devices is not only foolish as policy, it is inhumane in practice. And it is not just advocates like myself who are giving voice to this systemic problem. Homeless people themselves have been consistently vocal on the issue.

Every Monday night, Calvary Episcopal Church in Santa Cruz, known by all as the "Red Church," hosts a coffeehouse and meal for between 125 and 200 members of our local homeless community. I help out as a server and we often speak of the need for shelter and the lack of real housing.

One comment I hear often is: "I've been on the waiting list for Section 8 housing for months and don't know if I'll ever get housing."

Another comment: "Even if I get my voucher, landlords in Santa Cruz don't want to rent to a person like me."

And another: "Housing? You've got to be kidding. I'm just trying to find some shelter at night."

And one more: "All the money they say they are spending on housing. What about some shelter space?"

These comments are not in the least unusual and reflect the frustration that permeates the homeless experience in this regard. Yet the glaring lack of safe, available, nightly shelter receives scant consideration when "smart solutions" are so singularly focused on a "housing first" model.

And here let me draw the critical distinction between "shelter" and "housing." Even the most ambitious housing programs, such as the 100,000 Homes Campaign, can only hope to successfully house even a fraction of our HUD-defined chronically homeless population.

In Santa Cruz, the local campaign partner, 180/180, has housed 200 individuals during the past two-and-a-half years. A fine thing, but what of the other 95 percent of people experiencing homelessness who don't even qualify for such a program and yet have a continuing, nightly need for safe shelter?

Here's my point. The finite financial resources available to programs created to shelter people experiencing homelessness are almost entirely being devoted to "housing" them. Where are the programs that build shelter space capacity to accommodate the vast majority of our homeless population? Where are the year-round "walk-up" shelters? Where are the armory-style shelters? Where are the designated family shelters? Where are the Safe Spaces Recreational Vehicle Parking Programs for the vehicularly housed? Where are the Sanctuary-style villages that could provide transitional shelter for those needing a temporary starting point for re-entry into the employment market?

These options are being ignored, or at the very least discounted out of hand. And this is precisely why "housing first" models are structurally unsound. They do not, and cannot, differentiate between the varied and distinct needs of individual groups within the homeless community.

Not every person experiencing homelessness wants to be "housed." Many would welcome a safe shelter space but are not prepared to assume the responsibility that housing imposes. And here I hasten to add that the overarching preference for a housing first model is not borne of statutory or resource restriction, but rather is solely driven by political will. Indeed, existing law favors the establishment of a "shelter" first model.

Senate Bill 2 is a California statute enacted in 2008 that provides for designated zoning for emergency shelters. But more than that, it provides that any property or site in a community may be so designated if there is "insufficient shelter space" for the total number of people experiencing homelessness in that community.

In Santa Cruz and Santa Cruz County, that means that walk-up or armory-style emergency shelters can be established *anywhere in the city or county without* government approval because (and here's where the arithmetic is not lazy), we have less than 700 emergency shelter beds to serve a population of 3,500.

In our homeless community, there is a "storm threatening their very lives" every day. And although many members of mainstream society wish they would simply "fade away," we must not waiver in the humanitarian effort to recognize their presence and support their needs.

There are many men and women of good will who believe that a "housing first" model is the best hope for doing just that and my words here should not be taken to demean those good-faith efforts.

But in our national rush to house we must not abandon the vision of creating safe shelter space as a fundamental part of a holistic approach to creating positive outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.

Steve Pleich is an advocate with the Santa Cruz Homeless Persons Advocacy Project.

Predatory Psychotherapists

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ening, and it implied possible retaliation through the one avenue of hostilities that Alpha Centauri still had available.

"I wasn't here," said the Sirius creature.

***

Jonathan sat again in the living room and was hypnotized by his mother.

"Young man, we must take action to deal with these extraterrestrials. They have begun to infiltrate more organizations and probably are planning to take over the government. This will require bravery..." And she repeated: "You are fearless."

***

Janice summoned Jonathan into her office on the top floor of the clinic, the converted Victorian house. She intended to put John "in his place" once and for all. Another type of intelligence-bobbing device was on Janice's desk, disguised as a pencil sharpener. It relied on microwaves to produce brain damage, and it had a large, obtrusive button on top, which did not look like a normal part of a pencil sharpener.

Jonathan sat next to Janice's desk and said, "I know your secret."

"Are you having delusions about extraterrestrials again? It hasn't been in your chart for a few years." Janice was flipping through the pages of Jonathan's four-inch thick treatment chart, and paused on the last page to make some notes.

"How did you get such a good disguise?" said Jonathan.

Janice froze. If Jonathan could convince anyone of Janice's off-planet origin, it would spell big trouble for her and the rest of the Alpha Centaurians. Janice, because she wasn't from Earth, didn't realize that no normal human being would ordinarily consider the possibility that Jonathan could be correct and non-delusional.

Janice was about to hit the button on the brain-damaging device. It baffled her that she was hesitating. Did she feel bad for the young human?

Jonathan moved lightning fast, and produced a large pocketknife and made a large slash in Janice's arm before she could react to defend herself. Instead of blood gushing from the wound, green scaly skin was visible. Janice sat in her chair, apparently immobilized; this was not a reaction that a human being would have. The arm of Janice's costume dangled below, separated from her actual reptilian arm. Janice sat in her chair, trembled, and wailed. John was baffled that this "thing" took no action.

Suppressing an urge to retch, John reached around Janice's desk to press her panic button, which would summon security people who presumably were human.

"The jig is up," said Jonathan. Loud footsteps were audible from the nearby staircase. Soon, human beings would realize that they had been infiltrated by Alpha Centauri creatures, and this discovery would bring the possibility of interstellar war.

A Quaker's Quest for a World Without War

from page 1

created an international uproar.

In all these campaigns and many more, he seemed to be guided as if by the hands of destiny to to be present at some of the most epochal movements for social change.

Quakers in the Oval Office

Perhaps the most striking case of serendipity occurred when Hartsough, at the age of 22, ended up in the Oval Office with a Quaker delegation that urged President John F. Kennedy to take immediate actions for disarmament and world peace. Hartsough also took the same message of peace to the Kremlin as the United States and Soviet Union stood on the very brink of nuclear war.

Quakers have a long and remarkable history of speaking truth to power. In his recent book *JFK and the Unspeakable*, peace activist and theologian James Douglass described the significant impact that John F. Kennedy's meeting with six Quakers in May 1, 1962, in the Oval Office had on the president.

Hartsough called himself "the token young guy" on a six-person Quaker delegation that met with President Kennedy to discuss world peace and nuclear disarmament at a time when the threat of nuclear war had reached an historic high point.

The others invited to the Oval Office made up a who's who of prominent Quaker peace advocates: Ed Snyder and Samuel Levering, executive secretary and chairperson, respectively, of the Friends Committee on National Legislation; Henry Cadbury, a professor at Harvard Divinity School and the chairperson of the American Friends Service Committee; Dorothy Hutchinson, president of the U.S. section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; and George Willoughby, who had sailed on the Golden Rule into the nuclear testing area in the Pacific.

In an interview with *Street Spirit*, Hartsough described his meeting with JFK. "Kennedy met with us in his office, sitting in his rocking chair next to the fireplace, and we sat around him, and he listened to us. We told him there was a nuclear submarine that was to be named the William Penn, and that was totally unacceptable."

Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, was a Quaker and a pacifist. Naming a nuclear submarine the William Penn is exactly the same as naming a battleship the USS Gandhi or a jet bomber the St. Francis of Assisi.

Hartsough said, "Kennedy just grinned and told us, 'I'll see that it doesn't happen.' " The president was as good as his word, and the nuclear-armed submarine was not named after the Quaker pacifist.

Then, the delegation proceeded to make even more utopian requests on the president. "At that time, in China, there was a drought and many people were dying," Hartsough explained. "China was, of course, our arch-enemy then, in addition to Russia. And the United States was spending millions of dollars to store food in grain siloes. So we suggested giving food to China."

Kennedy said, "You mean feeding the enemy?'

The delegation said, "Yes, that's exactly what we mean." The Quaker team reminded the Catholic JFK that unconditional love and feeding the poor went to the heart of the New Testament.

Then, they addressed the terribly urgent concern that had brought them to meet with the president as the world faced the very real possibility of nuclear war. They asked Kennedy to stop nuclear testing and to move the nation away from the growing threat of nuclear disaster.

A sit-in challenges segregation at People's Drug Store in Arlington, Virginia, in June 1960. David is seated on the far right.

Challenging JFK to peace race

"I encouraged Kennedy to challenge the Russians to a peace race," Hartsough said. "Instead of having an arms race where one side builds an atomic bomb, so the other side gets an atomic bomb, and then the first side gets a hydrogen bomb. So why not try to go in the other direction, towards disarmament."

Kennedy's thoughtful response placed some of the responsibility back on the shoulders of peace activists. He said the idea of a peace race was a very interesting concept. But he added, "If you guys are serious about us moving in that direction, the military is very strong, so you are going to have to build a powerful movement to help me make that decision."

The president's secretary came in after 25 minutes and said, "Mr. President, your next appointment is here." Kennedy said, "Tell them to wait, I'm learning something from these Quakers."

All six members of the Quaker delegation were highly impressed by Kennedy's listening with an open mind to the radical antiwar values of the delegation, and his evident sincerity in understanding the urgent need to work for world peace.

"I think most important to me was, first, that he listened," Hartsough said. "He wasn't just pontificating as if he was the president and we were lowly peons. And, second, we were speaking truth to power in the White House, and Kennedy wasn't just rejecting it as hogwash."

Kennedy only had 18 more months to live from the time of this meeting to his assassination in November 1963. In that short time, he stopped atmospheric nuclear weapons testing, de-escalated the Cuban missile crisis instead of pushing the button to unleash nuclear weapons on the Soviet Union, took important steps to stop the escalation of a nuclear confrontation in Berlin, and made the decision to bring U.S. advisers out of Vietnam.

Hartsough said that Kennedy had run for president as a Cold Warrior, and his growing awareness of the need for peace and disarmament was a hopeful sign.

Hartsough said, "As Jim Douglass, I think, would agree, our meeting may have helped plant some seeds about taking steps for peace later in his presidency. But I think it was the Cuban missile crisis that really scared the daylights out of him and Khrushchev, and helped Kennedy decide to take the courageous steps for peace he did in the latter part of his presidency."

True to his Quaker beliefs in speaking truth to power, the young David Hartsough spoke out for disarmament on both sides of the Cold War. While a student at Howard University, he studied for a year abroad in East and West Berlin.

"At that time," he said, "the United States and the Soviet Union were threatening to blow each other off the map and kill hundreds of millions of people in a nuclear war because we had so dehumanized 'the other.' They were no longer human beings. They were enemies.

"We had psyched ourselves up in our anti-communist crusade. And the Soviet Union had taken a similar stand against the capitalist, imperialist, American warmongers. So Berlin was the one place in the world where I could study both in the Communist world and the Western world, and get a deeper understanding into what both sides were saying."

Again, a fateful sense of timing landed him in Berlin in 1961, the year that the Berlin Wall was built, a time of rising tension and perilous confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Camping in the Soviet Union

Hartsough had learned that was it permissible to go camping in the Soviet Union, and it only cost two dollars per day for the visa and the permission to camp. As Hartsough and four other students started off on the road between Berlin and Moscow, he said, "all of a sudden tanks and trucks full of soldiers were headed toward Berlin to help build the Berlin Wall."

He had studied Russia in college and seized the opportunity to "get to know the Russian people — these people we were threatening to bomb off the face of the earth." His group spent about a month on a 6,000-mile trip through Russia and the Ukraine. They camped out and were invited into people's homes for meals. One of their guides spoke fluent Russian, so they had in-depth conversations with people in their homes, churches and farming villages.

Hartsough took two more groups of 18 students into Russia in the next two years. He wrote an AFSC booklet about the trip called *Backyard Russia: Getting to Know the Russian People*. He said, "When you get to know the people as human beings, it's even more difficult to think about bombing their homes and their families."

Yet he was dismayed to find that the Russian people's view of the United States was distorted with the same Cold War propaganda he had heard at home.

" They had the same kind of mentality that Americans had. They had been fed propaganda also, and saw their nuclear bombs as peaceful bombs."

Some questions that the Russian people asked about the United States really struck home. "We were in Russia during the Freedom Rides when buses were burning up and people were being beaten for riding them," Hartsough said. "So they really challenged us, saying, 'You call yourselves a democracy, but why is your country doing this stuff?'"

The Quixotic Quaker Versus the Pentagon and Kremlin

A month after his meeting with Kennedy, Hartsough was arrested for holding a prayer vigil in front of the White House calling for an end to nuclear weapons testing. His sign said, "Bomb Tests Kill People," and he was jailed in Washington, D.C.

Later that summer, he was in Russia, and realized nobody was going to challenge the Russian bomb tests. So Hartsough and a fellow student carried the exact same message to Red Square, holding a sign saying, in Russian, "Bomb Tests Kill People."

They stood in a silent vigil holding the sign right next to the Kremlin and the Lenin mausoleum. People would come up and say, "Why are you against our peaceful bombs?" And, "Go back to the United States and demonstrate there."

Hartsough replied, "We did demonstrate in the United States, and they told us to go demonstrate in Russia!"

Then the Soviet police came and told them it was illegal to demonstrate against their "peaceful bombs" and they could get 20 years in prison. "We told the police we had been arrested a month ago in front of the White House for offering the same message," Hartsough said.

The police left, saying they had to talk with their superiors about what to do. They were not arrested, but Russian officials decided not to let Hartsough back in Russia for 26 years. "For 26 years, I was persona non grata — until Gorbachev," he said.

The first time I met David Hartsough was in February 1982, right after many of us were arrested at Livermore Laboratory in the first major act of civil disobedience at the nuclear weapons facility. A photo on the front page of that day's Livermore newspaper showed Hartsough being dragged away by the police in handcuffs.

First impressions are interesting. The photo showed a man in a sports coat with short hair, glasses and a conservative appearance. Yet he had gone limp and refused to cooperate with the cop arresting him. Somehow, he looked like the quintessential Quaker, once again in handcuffs as Quaker dissenters so often were.

David's father, Ray Hartsough, was a congregational minister who had refused

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to become a chaplain or be involved in the U.S. military. Ray Hartsough went to Gaza with the AFSC and the United Nations in 1949, and spent nine months going through the battle lines and bringing food, medicine and tents to refugees.

This made a deep impression on 8-year-old David. "He was willing to put his own life on the line for people he had never met," he said of his father.

Hartsough's father became a Quaker and began working with the AFSC, and David got to know the "amazing people" his father brought to their home — civil rights activists Ralph David Abernathy and Bayard Rustin, and Quaker activists Steve Cary and Clarence Pickett.

David also became a Quaker at age 13, and he has been a Quaker his entire adult life. His wife, Jan Hartsough, a dedicated activist on food and hunger issues, is also a Quaker. Both David and Jan are peace and justice activists who worked with the AFSC for nearly two decades.

Quakers are a very tiny denomination in the United States — as tiny as leaven. Yet they have had a major impact on peace and justice movements, out of all proportion to their numbers. Quakers have been an integral part of the movement to abolish slavery, the Underground Railroad, the suffrage movement to win the right to vote for women, the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, the Sanctuary movement, the anti-nuclear movement, and the prison reform movement.

Quakers have been such a central part of so many campaigns for peace and justice, it is hard to believe that there are only an estimated 87,000 Quakers in the United States. By comparison, there are 75 million Catholics, 13.5 million Lutherans and 8 million Methodists in the U.S.

I asked what being a lifelong Quaker has meant to him. He explained that Quakers try to speak out for justice and peace in the world, both as individuals and through the organizations they have created, including the Friends Committee for National Legislation (FCNL), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and their denominational body, the Religious Society of Friends.

"Quakers believe that all people are created by God," he said. "We're all children of God, so we are brothers and sisters. So we have a responsibility to one another if someone is hungry or in prison or in a war zone. Quakers try to live by their values and beliefs: love and compassion and caring for one another, and for the planet and the environment."

It is a central article of faith to seek justice for homeless and hungry people, and for prisoners and refugees. And it is crucial to alleviate the suffering caused by warfare. "The causes of war are nationalism and greed and imperialism and we have a responsibility to address those causes of war," Hartsough said.

JOHNNY APPLESEED

The metaphor that best explains for me the life path of David Hartsough is Johnny Appleseed. Like Johnny Appleseed, he has planted many seeds, and catalyzed many movements and social justice campaigns, and then he moves on over the next horizon to plant more seeds of peace.

His uncanny ability to be at the right place at the right time is a source of amazement to me. As the director of AFSC's Nonviolent Movement Building Program for nearly two decades, David worked to help form the Pledge of Resistance and Nuremberg Action Group to oppose U.S. military intervention in Central America. He did the nonviolence trainings to prepare Witness for Peace teams on peacemaking missions to Nicaragua, and then spent several months in Nicaragua with their volunteers.

He helped form the Peace Navy that joined longshoremen in blocking the unloading of South African cargo ships in the anti-apartheid movement. He conducted nonviolence trainings for the Abalone Alliance, and he worked with Native Americans in the Four Corners area of the Southwest and at DQ University when it was threatened with closure.

Another apple seed that Hartsough planted was the creation of AFSC's Homeless Organizing Project, a program that organized many years of housing takeovers and civil disobedience, and began publishing *Street Spirit* in 1995.

The Nonviolent Movement Building Program launched the homeless program, Hartsough explained, to "challenge our society's inhumanity and neglect of homeless people, challenging the governments that criminalized homeless people."

My past 30 years of work on homeless issues — along with all of the housing takovers and arrests and the entire 20-year history of *Street Spirit* — is only one of the innumerable projects that Hartsough has catalyzed, just one of the many apple seeds he has planted along the way.

A QUIXOTIC QUAKER

Hartsough was only 14 when he organized his first nonviolent protest at a Nike missile plant. Now, 60 years later, he remains as actively involved as ever. Many people begin their lives as idealists or radicals, but as the years pass by, they become more moderate, more "reasonable," often even more conservative.

By contrast, David Hartsough remains, more than ever, the utopian believer in global peace and economic justice for all. His latest campaign is called A World Beyond War, and it is perhaps the most quixotic and utopian campaign of all. It dreams the impossible dream of a world that has abolished war.

"Imagine all the people living life in peace," as John Lennon sang.

World Beyond War is just such a daring attempt to imagine a world at peace, and then organize for the creation of such a world. More than 4,000 people have signed its Declaration of Peace, pledging to work nonviolently to end all wars.

"You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one," Lennon reminded us.

Hartsough recently returned from a trip to Southeast Asia in April. He met with peace activists in South Korea and joined priests and nuns on Jeju Island protesting the construction of a massive military base at the port of Gangjeong by nonviolently blocking bulldozers and cement trucks. [See "A Journey of Peace in Korea and Vietnam" on pp. 6-7 of this issue.]

COMING HOME TO VIETNAM

He then spent two weeks in Vietnam as part of a Veterans for Peace delegation hosted by a group of American Vietnam veterans living in Vietnam.

Hartsough had been arrested many times during the war for acts of resistance to the massacres, bombings and battlefield atrocities. He also was a full-time lobbyist hired by the Friends Committee on National Legislation to try to stop the Vietnam War in the 1960s. His work was to lobby Congress and interact with peace groups around the country. Hartsough and other Quakers had been arrested week after week for reading the names of the war dead to the U.S. Congress.

When I asked what it felt like to finally travel to Vietnam for the first time after spending so many years of his life organizing to end the war, he called it a profoundly emotional homecoming. "In a way, it was just like coming home," he said. Yet, he was coming home to a place he had never even visited before this year.

He explained, "I had put in so many hours every day when I was a Quaker lobbyist trying to help members of Congress and the American people understand the reality of what that war was doing to the people of Vietnam. I was arrested and jailed a number of times for trying to prevent the bombs and weapons from being sent to Vietnam, and to stop the horrendous war the United States was inflicting on them. But I had never been there.

"So it was like coming home to get to know the Vietnamese people. Here is my family that I really cared deeply about, but I had never met them. And the friendliness and the openness of the Vietnamese people was so deeply moving to me."

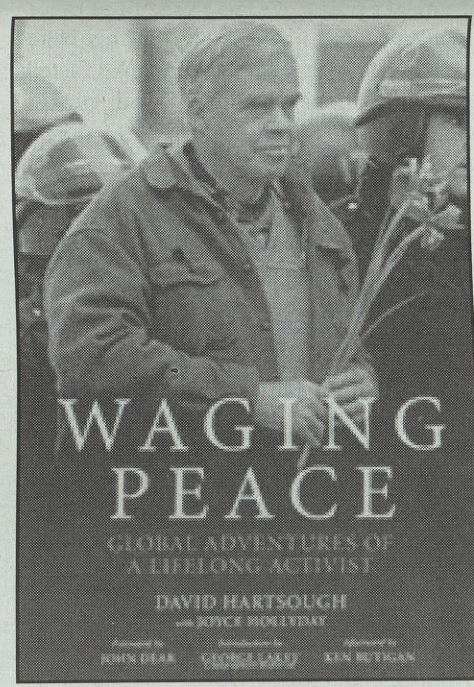
It was hard to fathom the friendliness and humanity he found in a land ravaged by U.S. bombs and where the toxic after-effects of Agent Orange have created an epidemic of human suffering.

"It was my country that had dropped millions of tons of bombs and Agent Orange, and the unexploded ordnance from that war is still killing their children now," he said. "Yet, their humanity to us, as Americans, was just mind-boggling. If some other country had bombed the United States to smithereens, and 30 years later they came to the U.S., I can't imagine we'd be inviting them into our homes, and be so friendly and open with them."

It is a small miracle, this friendliness from the citizens of a country that the U.S. targeted with saturation bombing, napalm and anti-personnel weapons.

The word "Friend" is synonymous with the word "Quaker." It seems fitting that a Friend from North America would find friends in Vietnam — a country that he had always steadfastly refused to believe was an enemy.

David and friends come to the aid of Brian Willson just after he was run over by a muntions train at Concord, Sept. 1, 1987.



Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Lifelong Activist
by David Hartsough
Published by PM Press, 272 pages
November 2014
Available on Amazon.com

David Hartsough

Bay Area Book Readings

Sunday, November 2, 1 p.m
San Francisco Friends Center
65 Ninth Street
San Francisco

Sunday, November 9, 7 p.m.
Berkeley Unitarian Universalist
1924 Cedar (at Bonita)
Berkeley

Come meet author and activist David Hartsough. David will read from his new book *Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Lifelong Activist*, and discuss his adventures in peacemaking.

Milestones on a Lifelong Path of Nonviolence

The *Street Spirit* Interview with David Hartsough

Interview by Terry Messman

Street Spirit: *Looking back at a lifetime of nonviolent activism, can you remember the first person who helped set your life on this path?*

David Hartsough: Gandhi. My parents gave me Gandhi's book, *All Men Are Brothers,* on my 14th or 15th birthday. And Martin Luther King who I met when I was 15.

Spirit: *Why was Gandhi's All Men Are Brothers such an inspiration?*

Hartsough: Because he said that nonviolence is the most powerful force in the world, and he believed that, and he practiced it. His entire life was made up of his experiments with nonviolence, his experiments with truth. He took nonviolence from being kind of a moral, theological, philosophical idea, and showed it could be a means of struggle to liberate a country.

That was a great model for me that nonviolence is not just morally superior to killing people, but was a more effective way of liberating people. Also, his belief that all people are children of God. We are all one. We're not black versus white, Americans versus Russians, good guys versus bad guys. We're all brothers and sisters. I took that seriously and that's what I believe.

David Hartsough demonstrates in Moscow's Red Square against Soviet nuclear weapons testing. Soviet police threatened him with 20 years in prison for the protest. Hartsough had just been arrested at the White House for protesting U.S. nuclear tests.

Spirit: *What was your first involvement in a social-change movement as a young activist?*

Hartsough: When I was 14, there was a Nike missile site near where I lived in Philadelphia. This was when people were hiding under their desks in school or going into air raid shelters to try to be safe when we had a nuclear war — which is absolutely ridiculous. So I organized other young people to have a vigil at this Nike missile site over Thanksgiving. We fasted and we walked around with our picket signs in front of the place, and that's where my FBI record started.

Spirit: *How do you know that?*

Hartsough: I got my FBI records back in the 1970s. The records said: "David Hartsough, son of Ray Hartsough, organized a vigil at the Nike missile site."

Spirit: *That is despicable. They didn't have anything better to do than investigate a kid who is concerned about peace and nuclear war. Why did you get involved at such a young age?*

Hartsough: Well, the American Friends Service Committee, at that time, had programs and seminars for high school students in Washington, D.C., and in New York at the United Nations. My dad was working with the AFSC and with the people running these seminars where I met other young people from around the country that shared the vision of working for a just and peaceful world. That felt very empowering to me that I wasn't alone, and nourished my young heart that this is what I wanted to do with my life.

Spirit: *How in the world were you fortunate enough to wind up in Montgomery, Alabama, during the bus boycott? You were there at the very birthplace of the civil rights movement.*

Hartsough: My dad worked at AFSC as the Peace Education secretary, and he would take people like A.J. Muste and Bayard Rustin speaking at churches all across the Northeast. He would often bring those speakers back to our home afterwards. So during the Montgomery bus boycott, my dad organized speaking tours for Ralph David Abernathy. [Abernathy was a close associate of Martin Luther King, Jr. and an organizer of the bus boycott.]

When he brought Ralph to our home in Pennsylvania, Ralph told us this was the first time he had ever dined in a white home. He was telling us about the boycott, and Ralph said to my dad, "Why don't you bring your boys down to Montgomery?"

So during spring vacation of 1956, that's what we did. We saw up front the injustice and the oppression people faced. On the way there, we stopped at Koinonia community, an inter-racial community in Georgia, and in the room where we slept, there was a bullet hole in the wall from a week earlier. That's the way people were treating folks who were living inter-racially. So that was my introduction.

Then Ralph took us around Montgomery, and we saw one of the churches that had just been bombed, and the pews were all in splinters, and the cross was hanging on its side. But people were getting up an hour earlier to walk to work every day, and people had caught a vision of a world that could be very different and were willing to struggle nonviolently. And they supported each other.

We went to the prayer services that happened every night. We saw the car pools, and we saw the police arresting people for having an "illegal transportation system," just for giving people rides. But people found the courage to face that violence and oppression.

Spirit: *When you witnessed the racism and violence people faced simply for organizing a bus boycott, what affect did that have on you at age 15?*

Hartsough: Well, it was much more than just reading Gandhi. This was a form of struggle where a whole community of people supported each other in working toward a vision of justice. They did not give up and were willing to suffer for it. Even when their churches were bombed, they still maintained their love and nonviolence and human dignity.

Spirit: *What a gift that was for a young person to be around Ralph David Abernathy at the very beginning of the struggle for civil rights. Did you also meet Martin Luther King on this trip?*

Hartsough: Yes, we met Martin Luther King and came to a meeting of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which was essentially made up of the pastors of all the black churches and one white church involved in the bus boycott.

Martin Luther King introduced me and my brother Paul to the whole group. He said, "These young boys have come down from Pennsylvania to see our struggle and support us." That was quite amazing, although I had no idea in 1956 that he was going to become this extraordinary figure who was going to help transform America.

Spirit: *You got to meet my all-time heroes — the people who launched the bus boycott, and triggered the entire Freedom Movement. What else do you remember about meeting Dr. King?*

Hartsough: Well, he seemed older to me, but he was really very young. He was 26 or 27. He was very congenial, even though we were just these young kids from out of town. He showed us his understanding and support and welcoming and friendliness.

I think, even at that time, the other pastors were realizing that this guy was a gift from God. And the way he was conducting the meeting, it wasn't a rush job, like, "I know just what to do." Instead, he was gathering the ideas and suggestions and concerns from everybody, and then helping them find a solution, and helping to build that movement to be the effective movement that it became.

Spirit: *When we visited King's first church, Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, a couple years ago, I saw the impact that visit had on you. What did it mean to find yourself walking inside King's church again, an entire lifetime after you had first visited it in your youth?*

Hartsough: I remembered how inspired I had been at the very beginning, inspired by this man and this movement, and then seeing it develop into a powerful movement that helped transform this country. That movement not only challenged racial injustice, but challenged militarism and poverty and economic injustice. And I was some part of that, and I took part in the Poor People's Campaign.

But my feelings had changed from being inspired to now feeling reverence for this man's life and the struggle that he had given important leadership to, even being willing to risk his own life to help transform this country. I remembered something King had said once in a church basement where there were 35 people. He said, "We have the power in this room, if we mobilize it, to totally transform this country." He believed that, and he was able to help inspire other people to believe that and act on that belief.

Spirit: *King really was a prophet — a gift from God who delivered the ultimate challenge to the powers that be. What can we learn today from his example in building a movement to overcome injustice?*

Hartsough: Well, first, like Gandhi, he was taking the idea of nonviolence and really making that an effective means of struggle. King looked at the system of segregation and horrendous injustice in the United States, and applied the theory and practice of nonviolence in the struggle for the liberation of black people in the United States.

Many Americans now do not really understand how destructive it was that in the mid-1950s, at the time of the Montgomery bus boycott, black people could not ride on the buses, could not drink at water fountains or go in the bathrooms, and could not stay in the motels. Children could not play in the parks. If you tried to register to vote in some of the deep Southern states, you could get lynched or fired from your job or find a burning cross in front of your house.

The United States talks about terrorism now, but black people in the South experienced a lot of terrorism from a very early age, starting back centuries ago and into the 1900s and through the 1960s.

So, in the face of that terror, and in the face of all that fear and injustice and hatred and discrimination, Martin Luther King helped people in the South find the courage and the determination to struggle nonviolently. I experienced that in Alabama in the spring of 1956 during the Montgomery bus boycott. It just really challenged me to the core that nonviolence and the method that King was using in Montgomery was a method that could be used to help transform this country. I was also inspired by the gunshot fired into the Koinonia house in Americus, Georgia.

Spirit: *Why in the world would a gunshot in the house you're in inspire you?*

Hartsough: Well, it showed how deep the system of injustice and racism is in this country. They were willing to shoot into a house where they didn't know the people, but those people believed in inte-

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gration and brotherhood. They were saying that they were not going to live by the Southern mores that we must be separate.

So partly inspired by King and the Koinonia inter-racial community, and partly inspired by Bayard Rustin, I decided to go to Howard University, which was an all-black university at that time.

Spirit: *How did Bayard Rustin influence you?*

Hartsough: I got to know Bayard when I was a young kid. He was a man with a vision. He'd been in federal prison for two years as a conscientious objector during World War II. He was the person that, perhaps more than anybody else, influenced Martin Luther King to deepen his understanding and his practice of nonviolence in the struggle for justice. He was a good strategic thinker, always very clear, and lived by his principles.

Bayard was black, he was a pacifist, he was gay, and he was a Quaker — just about everything where society could say, "Well, those are second-class citizens, and un-American" [laughing]. He was all of those things, and he was proud of it.

He understood the importance of building a broad-based, powerful movement. He organized the famous March on Washington in August of 1963, bringing together the largest demonstration that had ever happened at that point in Washington.

And I could actually talk to Bayard Rustin at key times in my life as a young kid when I was wondering if I should go in this direction or in that direction.

Spirit: *What did attending Howard University mean to you?*

Hartsough: I really felt it was a step towards integration. My dad actually knew the president and vice-president of Howard, both of whom were friends of Gandhi. Mordecai Johnson, the president of Howard, was a very close friend of Gandhi. William Stuart Nelson, the vice-president, also was a student of Gandhi, and he taught my first class on nonviolence at Howard Divinity School.

Spirit: *How did you get involved in civil rights sit-ins while at Howard?*

Hartsough: I started at Howard in the fall of 1959. In February 1960, when four students sat down at the Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina, we at Howard University felt we should do something. So immediately after the four students were arrested in Greensboro, we started picketing at the Woolworth's store near Howard.

We did some research and found that everything in Maryland and Virginia was segregated. Even African ambassadors to the United Nations traveling on the main highway in Maryland could not eat at the segregated restaurants. So we decided we would sit in at lunch counters in Maryland to challenge the segregation laws.

Usually within a very short time, they would close the lunch counter and call the police, and we would be arrested, put in handcuffs and taken to jail. We'd spend the weekend singing freedom songs in jail, go to court Monday morning and go back to class on Monday.

American Nazi Party leader George Lincoln Rockwell lived in northern Virginia and was threatening violence to anybody who challenged the segregation laws there. In June 1960, we decided we had to challenge that law in Virginia.

We did some additional nonviolence training, then went to the People's Drug Store, a chain store. We sat down at the lunch counter and it was closed immediately. The owner refused to serve us, but didn't have us arrested because he didn't want the publicity. So we actually ended up sitting there for two days, and it was the most challenging two days of my life.

Protesters kneel in prayer and block the road into Livermore Laboratory in resistance to the nuclear weapons designed there.

Spirit: *What happened? And did the American Nazi Party ever get involved?*

Hartsough: People came out and would spit at us in the face. They put lit cigarettes down our shirts, and others punched us in the stomach, sometimes so hard that we would fall on the floor, and then they would kick us.

The American Nazi Party did come with signs saying, "Is We or Is We Ain't Equals," and a picture of an ape. They were yelling white supremacist nonsense and telling us to go back to Russia. Each time we were attacked we would try to respond in a nonviolent, peaceful way. It was very difficult.

Spirit: *Given that much violence and hostility, your very lives were in danger.*

Hartsough: Towards the end of the second day, I was reading from the Sermon on the Mount: love your enemies and do good to those who hate you. A guy came up behind me and said, "You [expletive], if you don't get out of the store in two seconds, I will stab this through your heart."

His face had the most terrible look of hatred I've ever seen, and in his hand was a switchblade, a half-inch from my heart.

I realized I had two seconds to decide if I really believed in nonviolence. But we had had a lot of practice for these kinds of situations. So I looked him in the eye and I said, "Friend, do what you believe is right, but I'll still try to love you."

It was quite miraculous. His face had been contorted with hatred, but his jaw began to drop and the hand holding his knife began to drop to his side — and he left the store. To me, at the age of 20, that was a pretty powerful experience.

Nonviolence is not just a morally superior way of relating to people, but it's probably the only thing I could have done and come out alive.

But then we did something even more challenging. There were about 500 people outside the store with rocks who were threatening violence. We went to the front door and read a statement that we'd written appealing to the religious and community leaders in Arlington, Virginia, to use their influence to integrate all the eating facilities in Arlington. And this is the hard part: We said that if nothing changes, we'd be back in a week.

Spirit: *You were surrounded by hundreds of hostile people. How many of you were actually doing the sit-in?*

Hartsough: About 12. Some friendly media people got us out of there alive. Their cars were right outside the door. When we crossed the bridge back into Washington, D.C., it was like entering the freedom land, and getting away from all that. We literally shook in our boots for the next six days at the idea of having to find the courage to go back and do that again. On the sixth day, we got a phone call that the religious and community leaders had met. They went and talked with the business leaders and had gotten a commitment that within 10 days, the eating facilities would be opened (desegregated) in Arlington. And they were!

Spirit: *This sounds like it was a major turning point in your life. Was it?*

Hartsough: At the age of 20, this was the most important lesson of my whole life.

Spirit: *How would you describe the lesson you learned?*

Hartsough: When you see an injustice or violence or something terribly wrong, you can curse the television set or the president. Cursing the television doesn't help very much. But instead, you can find some other people that share your vision of a just society, and who are committed to nonviolence in addressing that injustice, and have the courage to change it.

Those are the alternatives we have. We can do nothing. We can get depressed and let the world go to hell. Or we can find others that share that vision and commitment and work with them. So, to me, that was a life-changing experience, and that's the reason I've been involved in nonviolent movements and actions ever since.

Many of the people that were part of these demonstrations in Virginia and Maryland became key people in SNCC, and were part of the Freedom Rides where the bus riders were beaten and buses got burned up, and the Mississippi Summer voter registration drive. So we were all cutting our teeth during these first sit-ins.

Spirit: *King and other civil rights leaders began speaking out against the Vietnam War in the mid-1960s. Didn't you also become deeply involved in the anti-war movement at this time?*

Hartsough: I was doing peacemaking work in my job with the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). Starting in the mid-1960s, FCNL asked me to be their lobbyist to try to stop the Vietnam War. My work was to interact with Congress and interact with peace movements around the country, including the Vietnam Moratorium.

Quakers started reading the names of the war dead every Wednesday to the Congress, and they were arrested for doing that. I was arrested at these protests. After about four weeks of being arrested, I went to Rep. George Brown from Southern California. He was a very good person.

[*Editor's Note:* Rep. George Brown, a Democrat from L.A., was a Quaker and a strong advocate of civil rights and peace.]

I said, "George, we're reading the names of the war dead at the Congress and they just throw us in jail. Is there anything you can do to help us?"

He was a typical-looking Congressman with a big cigar, and he sat back in his swivel chair and said, "Yeah, I'm going to join you. And I'll write a letter to every member of Congress telling them that I'm joining you and inviting them to join you."

He wrote the letter, and the next day, we had four members of Congress reading the names of the war dead on the front steps of the Capitol. So when we were all arrested, the congressmen kept reading the names of the war dead because they had congressional immunity. They got through the whole 40,000 names of American war dead, or whatever it was at that point.

Within a week or two, *Look Magazine* had a picture of every American that had been killed in Vietnam. And then people in the peace movement were reading the names of the war dead all over the country, at federal buildings and at post offices, inspired by what we had done. It was a small step to try to help build that movement. Our actions gave courage to Congress people and then other congressional representatives became involved.

Spirit: *While you were working against the Vietnam War for FCNL, Martin Luther King began speaking about the need to resist racism, militarism and poverty simultaneously, a vision that culminated in the Poor People's Campaign. Were you involved with the Poor People's Campaign while at FCNL?*

Hartsough: I had followed the civil rights movement very closely, of course. When King got the Nobel Peace Prize, he stopped in Washington, D.C., on the way back from Norway and met with President Johnson. He said, "Mr. President, we need a voting rights bill."

The president essentially said, "I agree with you Dr. King, but we just passed the civil rights bill, and you've got to wait. It's going to take a few more years."

So King didn't waste any more time in Washington. He went south and helped organize the voting rights campaign. That

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mobilized the conscience of the nation and within several months, we had a voting rights bill. Here I was a lobbyist in Washington, but that taught me that real change doesn't come from the top down - it comes from the bottom up.

Because of that, I was even more inspired by King and the power of nonviolent movements. So when he had the vision of the Poor People's Campaign, my paying job was still lobbying to try to end the war. But on weekends, I had offered to do nonviolent trainings of people that were going to participate in the Poor People's Campaign. Also, we were building the shacks, the shanties where poor people would live in Washington, D.C.

Spirit: *Amazing! You actually helped build the wooden shacks that made up Resurrection City?*

Hartsough: Yes, on the weekends we built the shacks with plywood and two-by-fours. We actually were building them on the grounds of a church on the edge of town, and then they were all going to be taken by truck to the Capitol.

When the organizing for the Poor People's Campaign began, King was speaking quite often at gatherings where hundreds of people would come from all over the country. It was just so very moving. I really had a feeling that we could transform America.

Spirit: *It seemed like the entire Freedom Movement had been building up to this moment — a showdown with the federal government to end poverty.*

Hartsough: I felt this was going to bring this country to its senses and build the kind of nonviolent people's power that would mean that the power structure was going to have to address these issues.

As you know, it was a very, very rainy spring and summer in 1968. So the shanties were often in two or three feet of water, and we had to build boardwalks so people wouldn't get mired in the mud.

Spirit: *So Resurrection City became mired in the mud, and far worse, everyone was shocked and demoralized by King's murder. It's amazing that people were able to carry on with the campaign at all.*

Hartsough: Yes. But each day, a whole bunch of people from the Poor People's Campaign would go and try to meet with Congress, and with people from the Health, Education and Welfare Department, and with various government agencies, trying to encourage them to do what needed to be done about poverty, housing and jobs.

They developed a list of demands and walked from Resurrection City all the way down to the Capitol grounds to deliver these demands to Congress, trying to fundamentally address the poverty and injustice in this country. But when they got to the Capitol grounds they were all arrested — hundreds of people.

Quakers were having a conference up in New Jersey at the time when they heard about the arrests. They decided that this is King's last dream and vision of transforming this country, and when people nonviolently take their list of demands to Congress, they are arrested and thrown in jail. So we've got to do something. We can't just be sitting around here talking.

So several people from this conference, including Steve Cary, one of the most principled and courageous voices in the AFSC, went down and had a Quaker meeting for worship at the exact place where people had been arrested at the Capitol grounds. They brought a list of their demands and tried to walk up to the Capitol — and then we were arrested.

David Hartsough *(left)* and Dorothy Granada *(right)* block the first truck with munitions headed for El Salvador as part of Nuremberg Actions at Concord Naval Weapons Station, June 1987.

Spirit: *What role did Steve Cary play in getting Quakers to abandon their own conference to risk arrest with the Poor People's Campaign?*

Hartsough: At the time, Steve Cary was the acting executive secretary of the national American Friends Service Committee. He was just a very thoughtful, courageous spokesperson who articulated the Quaker values of reverence for every human being and courageous struggle to fight injustice and war and militarism. And he walked his talk.

Steve Cary was the head of AFSC programs in Europe after the Second World War when AFSC was awarded the Nobel Prize for its humanitarian work in post-war Europe. Europe had been devastated and AFSC got lots of Americans to go in and rebuild and get food to children.

So after the mass arrests of people from the Poor People's Campaign, Steve Cary led us in holding a Quaker worship in front of the Congress. Then we took the demands of the Poor People's Campaign to Congress, and we were all arrested and spent two weeks in jail.

Spirit: *Many AFSC activists and Quakers worked with the civil rights movement through the years, so it seems fitting that they would end up in jail as part of King's last campaign.*

Hartsough: We spent the next 14 or 15 days in the top floor of the D.C. jail, together with the hundreds of people from the Poor People's Campaign from all over the country. In addition, there were hundreds of people, mostly black, that had been picked up off the streets in the riots after King had been assassinated. People were thrown in jail with very little evidence of what they had done, and none of them had been given a chance to go to court. And essentially, their story had not even gotten out to the public.

One of the things we did after we got out of jail was to share with AFSC and the broader public that all of these folks had been sitting in jail since April 4. And they were still in jail in June! So that was the beginning of AFSC's pretrial justice program where they were really challenging that whole unconstitutional practice. You have a fundamental right to appear before a judge before being thrown in jail and left to rot for months.

Spirit: *In looking back, how would you measure the significance of the Poor People's Campaign? What did it mean to you and what did it mean to the country? And what effect did King's assassination have on this vision?*

Hartsough: Well, in the Poor People's Campaign, Martin Luther King was calling not just for an end to segregation, and not just an end to the Vietnam War and militarism, but a transformation of this country so there would be economic justice for every human being.

It was a brilliant and strategically thoughtful campaign to bring poor people from all over the country to Washington to camp out and nonviolently get in the way of business as usual until our government listened to the people and committed itself to ending poverty and injustice, and committed itself to developing real democracy and respect for every human being in this country.

Unfortunately, he was assassinated before that could happen, but his staff and those of us who were left did our best to try to put together the Poor People's Campaign. Many of us had been psychologically wounded by his assassination, and it was nowhere near as powerful as it could have been if he'd been here with us. But I do believe that the assassin may have killed King, but didn't kill his dream and his vision of justice for all.

For me personally, it was very important that I didn't stand aside and say, "Well, good luck to these people that are trying to carry out King's last campaign."

It was vital to be a part of it and to see courageous people from all over this country, from all backgrounds and all colors, standing up nonviolently and speaking truth to power in the halls of Congress and in the Justice Department and the White House and all over Washington.

To be in jail with hundreds of these people in that nonviolent struggle was a great experience for me. Some people think that the worst they can do is put you in prison. Yet it is really a privilege to be in prison with other people of conscience who are willing to put their lives on the line for justice. And getting to know people across the division lines of class and race and economic background is very important in strengthening our own sense that we're all brothers and sisters, and we're all children of one God. It sustains us and strengthens our commitment for the long struggle ahead.

Spirit: *You were involved in many actions during the struggle to end the Vietnam War. One action that really stands out is the People's Blockade of ships transporting weapons to Vietnam.*

Hartsough: Around Christmas in 1971, a season when we're thinking about the life of Jesus and his teaching to love one another and love our enemies, the United States started a major bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong. So now we were bombing major cities with children, women, old people, hospitals and schools.

Many of us in Philadelphia in the Movement for a New Society decided that we had to do something more than just get out with a sign and protest. We had to somehow put our bodies between the bombs and the men, women and children they were killing in Vietnam.

We found that there were bombs and munitions being shipped from the Leonardo Naval Weapons Station in New Jersey. So we scouted it out and found that napalm, anti-personnel bombs and all kinds of munitions were being shipped from Leonardo. We were able to recruit 26 canoes with 52 people, two in each canoe, and we decided to go out and try to block a ship called the USS Nitro.

As we paddled out along the piers, the anti-personnel bombs and crates of napalm were just stacked high, ready to be loaded onto the ships. A military policeman yelled at us over his loudspeaker that we would be charged with criminal conspiracy if we didn't leave this area, and could get 20 years in prison. We shouted back that 20 years would be terrible, but nowhere near as bad as the death and destruction that would be caused if these bombs reached their destination. And we kept paddling.

We were actually able to get out in front of the ship each day for seven days. On the sixth day, some of the sailors we met told us it was leaving at 6:00 the next morning. Not only the hold of the ship, but all the decks were stacked 20 feet high with these crates of bombs and munitions.

We got out there the next morning, and were paddling hard to stay right in front of the boat. As they lifted anchor, seven of the sailors jumped off the ship into the ocean and then joined our blockade.

Spirit: *Oh my God! Did they climb into your canoes?*

Hartsough: They tried to, but the military police grabbed them and put them back on the ship. But we had called the media, so the *New York Times* and the national television stations were there in their helicopters. So it was on the evening news, not only our blockade but also the

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seven sailors jumping ship. The seven sailors were then jailed in the brig.

The news went all across this country and around the world, and the sailors told us later that when their ship went through the Panama Canal, word about the sailors on the USS Nitro jumping ship had spread to navy and military people all over the world, and the guys on the other ships gave them fists of solidarity and peace signs.

Spirit: *So the ripples from this action had spread very far and very quickly. Did it spark other acts of resistance?*

Hartsough: My feeling was that our actions had given these Navy sailors the courage to do what they knew was right to do, and their courage, in turn, gave courage to a lot of other soldiers in the U.S. military, and that was a beginning of a strengthened resistance within the armed forces to carrying out the terrible death and destruction in Vietnam. Our blockade spread from Leonardo, New Jersey, all up and down the East Coast and the West Coast of the Untied States. The national board of the American Friends Service Committee actually decided to support and endorse the People's Blockade and to support AFSC staff working on it.

Spirit: *That was an incredible step into civil disobedience for AFSC to take. Were you part of the AFSC at this time?*

Hartsough: Yes, I was on AFSC's Nonviolent Training and Action Committee at the time. Robert Levering and several of us that were part of that committee heard that there were also ships going from Norfolk, Virginia. So we went to Norfolk, and there was an aircraft carrier called the USS America that was preparing to leave for Vietnam. Aircraft carriers are massive. I had my nine-foot sailboat, so we organized a blockade down there with canoes and our small sailboat.

They were very uptight as the USS America prepared to take off for Vietnam, and the military police came and capsized our canoes and sailboat. Then Navy frogmen came after us, grabbed us out of the water and took us on their ship. They put us in handcuffs face down on the ship with guys with guns pointed at us while the aircraft carrier sailed out to sea. It was a little bit scary.

Another ship came with a water cannon when all these sailors were up on the deck of this aircraft carrier. Many of them were giving us signs of support and verbal encouragement. We thought the water cannon was going to be directed against us, but it was directed against the sailors.

Spirit: *They blasted the sailors with the water cannon just because they were cheering you on?*

Hartsough: Yes, because they were cheering us on! Next day, the Norfolk newspapers had a big photo of this massive aircraft carrier with our little boat in front of it. The ship was called the USS America, so the headlines said, "America Defeats Peace Flotilla." America was standing tall again! They had defeated the enemy.

Spirit: *You mentioned earlier that the AFSC national board supported peace blockades around the country?*

Hartsough: AFSC members in both Northern California and down in Southern California were actively involved in helping organize blockades on the West Coast. In the Bay Area, it was called the Carrier Project, an official AFSC project. The AFSC board had decided it was willing to commit civil disobedience and support nonviolent resistance to the endless tragedy in Vietnam.

David Hartsough and his parents, Ray and Ruth Hartsough, before being arrested blocking a weapons train at Concord, 1988.

Up in Bangor, Washington, activists actually camped out along Puget Sound at a place where they could see the ships coming. They had a flotilla ready to go out and try to block naval ships, day or night. One of the guys, a very gutsy, courageous fellow, got right in front of a moving ship and it actually pushed him for a quarter of a mile in his boat.

[*Editor's note:* George Walker, a Navy vet, put his kayak right in the path of the USS Joseph Merrell. The USS Merrell finally sailed right over his small kayak and dunked Walker into Puget Sound.]

Spirit: *A photo in your new book shows you and your wife Jan Hartsough being arrested with your two young children. What happened at that protest?*

Hartsough: In 1971, Quakers who were very distressed about Nixon's continuing this horrendous war in Vietnam decided to have a Quaker meeting for worship in front of the White House. About 250 Quakers sat down on the sidewalk in front of the White House. My wife Jan and I and our two young children, Peter and Heidi, were sitting on the sidewalk with all of the Quakers, and the police interrupted our worship service and ordered us to leave or be arrested.

Nobody left, and people like Steve Cary, who was the associate executive secretary of AFSC, were there with us. All the other Quakers except my family were arrested. They apparently didn't think it was good publicity to arrest this family with young children. So here we were, sitting on the sidewalk after everyone else had been hauled away in jail buses, and the D.C. chief of police came over and implored us to leave, saying that if we were arrested, our children would be taken away and put in juvenile hall.

We told him that we certainly love our children, but we also love the children of Vietnam, and we'd be happy to leave if our government commits to stopping the bombing of Vietnam. He spent about half an hour trying to convince us to leave, and then placed us under arrest in a police car. He took us to a police station in Georgetown and let us out behind the police station — smart P.R. on his part.

The *Washington Post* and AP and UPI had photographs of the police chief leaning over our family, trying to convince us to leave. The photo and article went out across the country, so many of our friends sent us photos from local newspapers all across the country. Those photographs are in our kids' baby books.

Spirit: *Was it a hard decision for you and Jan to risk arrest with two children?*

Hartsough: I think a lot of people say that when you get married and have a family, you have to leave your values behind, and your concern about the rest of the people in the world. But we're still a part of the human family, and people who get killed or maimed or imprisoned in another part of the world are also part of our family. So we're not willing to give up our values just because we have children.

Spirit: *When were you hired as an AFSC staff in San Francisco?*

Hartsough: I was hired in 1973 to be part of the Simple Living Program with my wife Jan Hartsough. Then I formed the AFSC Nonviolent Movement Building Program in 1982.

Spirit: *As an AFSC staff, how did you become involved in the massive protests at the Diablo Canyon nuclear reactor in the late 1970s and early 1980s?*

Hartsough: In the Simple Living Program, we were concerned that nuclear power was promoted as a way to have endless consumerism and endless energy.

Spirit: *Consumerism fueled by radioactive plutonium.*

Hartsough: Yes, without any thought of an environmental future for our world. So when the Mothers for Peace in San Luis Obispo came to the American Friends Service Committee around 1976, they were struggling to stop this nuclear power plant being built in their backyard. They had tried everything legally possible to stop it and the government didn't care.

So they asked if we could help build a nonviolent movement to try to stop the Diablo Canyon Power Plant from going into operation. Our AFSC Simple Living Program decided we would support their struggle and help them build a statewide movement to stop that plant. About 30 different groups from all over the state formed Abalone Alliance to stop nuclear power and the Diablo Canyon reactor, and to promote alternative energy.

We had about 100 people trained as nonviolent trainers, and AFSC played an important role in helping build that movement. AFSC published "Decision at Diablo Canyon," a very well-researched booklet about the dangers of the Diablo Canyon plant being built on an earthquake fault. AFSC also put together the nonviolence training manual. The movement was also successful in stopping the nuclear plant up in Humboldt County, and the Rancho Seco plant near Sacramento.

Spirit: *Were you arrested for civil disobedience during Abalone Alliance's campaign to shut down Diablo Canyon?*

Hartsough: Yes, in 1977 and again in 1978, I was arrested. The first year, in 1977, there were 47 people arrested, and the next year, more than 470 were arrested. We'd multiplied our numbers by 10 times. And then, in 1981, when the license was finally granted, nearly 2,000 people were arrested at Diablo Canyon.

In 1981, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said this was the safest nuclear reactor in the world as it gave its approval for Diablo Canyon to go into operation. And here were hundreds and hundreds of us sitting in jail down at Diablo Canyon feeling we've done everything we can, and what more can we do?

Then somebody threw a newspaper over the fence of our exercise area, and one of the engineers at the plant had gone public that the blueprints for the seismic support for the cooling systems of one of the reactors had all been put on backwards.

So it took Pacific Gas and Electric another couple years to retrofit all of that and they had to spend another couple billion dollars before it could go into operation. That plant — built with the cooling systems in one of the reactors totally wrong and totally unsafe — is what the Nuclear Regulatory Commission called the safest nuclear reactor in the world!

So we were not successful in stopping that plant, but I think our resistance at Diablo Canyon and the resistance at Seabrook, where AFSC also played a very important role, and Three Mile Island, where Quakers were very involved, helped send a message to our government so that no new nuclear reactors were licensed in the United States for about 30 years. And California passed a proposition saying no more nuclear power plants until they found a safe way to store nuclear waste — which they've never found.

Spirit: *Abalone Alliance not only raised public consciousness about the dangers of nuclear power, it also educated people about how to build nonviolent movements. The actions at Diablo Canyon helped build an anti-nuclear movement that went on to organize opposition to nuclear weapons at Livermore Laboratory.*

Hartsough: Yes, all these actions raised a lot of public consciousness. All of that grew out of this movement. And many, many of the people that were involved in the Diablo Canyon struggle have continued to be involved in the movement ever since.

Spirit: A very large number of Abalone Alliance activists went on to help spark the Livermore Action Group in the Bay Area. Why did you decide to become involved in the Livermore protests?

Hartsough: Nuclear power and nuclear weapons are very connected. It seemed to be a very logical next step in the struggle. Dr. John Gofman, who had been the head of biomedical research at Livermore Laboratory, was one of our

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speakers at our rally in San Luis Obispo against Diablo Canyon. Gofman made that connection between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and how dangerous nuclear power was. And I had been involved in the struggle for nuclear disarmament and the efforts to try to stop nuclear testing for all of my life.

Spirit: *Beginning at age 14 when you protested the Nike missile plant.*

Hartsough: Yes, and then when I was 18, I went on the walk from Philadelphia to the United Nations in 1958 when we asked all nations to stop nuclear weapons testing. That was the year when four Quakers risked their lives trying to sail the Golden Rule into the nuclear weapons testing area of the Pacific Ocean.

That motivated many of us to walk from Philadelphia to the United Nations — about 100 miles — calling for an end to nuclear weapons testing. When we got to New York, we had about 500 people marching down the streets to the United Nations. At the time, it was the largest peace protest I'd ever seen in my life [laughing]. It was very inspiring.

Spirit: *The anti-nuclear movement may have started small but it would ultimately lead to far larger demonstrations at Livermore Lab and all over the nation.*

Hartsough: Livermore was the place that had developed the hydrogen bomb, the MX warhead and the neutron bomb, which could kill all the people and leave the buildings intact. So I was absolutely delighted when people in the Bay Area decided to begin a campaign to convert the Livermore Laboratory from building the next generation of nuclear weapons to doing positive peacetime research.

Spirit: *Thousands of people were arrested for blockading that holocaust laboratory. The Livermore actions were a very dramatic confrontation with the federal government.*

Hartsough: That's right. And when more than a thousand of us were in jail in 1982, and again in 1983, the authorities used fear as a means of trying to control us. But I think most of us had overcome that fear and we were willing to spend two weeks in jail or whatever it took to try to help turn the arms race around.

Instead of being afraid while in jail, we used that time to organize workshops and trainings. People shared their life stories and Dan Ellsberg taught us everything he knew about nuclear weapons development. It was a massive teach-in! I organized a strategy game using civilian based defense as a nonviolent means of defending a country.

So we became much stronger through that time in jail. The authorities finally realized that their system of intimidation and fear through holding us in jail was not working. They decided it was a poor use of their money to give us free room and board to do workshops to strengthen our movement [laughing].

Spirit: *We found out later that we were nearly bankrupting the city of Livermore because of the massive costs of imprisoning thousands of people, and the huge court costs.*

Hartsough: That's why in subsequent years, after they arrested us they would never even bring charges because they realized it's not going to stop us.

Spirit: *The nuclear arms race was so massive, and the military-industrial complex so powerful, that many thought resistance was futile. Yet those who actually stepped forward and resisted the arms race found great new levels of hope.*

The first demonstration David Hartsough ever organized was at the Nike missile site near his home in Pennsylvania.

Hartsough: What our government wants us to do is to just sit back and either support or silently condone all of the horrendous things they do, including developing nuclear weapons which could put an end to life on earth. Having people who are willing to speak out and get in the way of the arms race through blocking the entrances at Livermore Lab is the kind of thing we had hoped the German people would do during the Third Reich in Nazi Germany. They could have said, "Enough is enough! Stop this madness!"

And here at Livermore, we had thousands of people who were willing to do that. And this resistance was also happening at Los Alamos Laboratory and the Nevada Test Site, and all over Europe. A massive movement arose in Europe and at Greenham Common in resistance to Cruise and Pershing missiles. It was and is an example of nonviolent people's power saying no to the madness that our government was trying to inflict upon us. And that gives me hope.

Spirit: *Many anti-nuclear activists soon began working with the Pledge of Resistance to oppose U.S. military intervention in Central America. What role did you play in forming the Pledge?*

Hartsough: After many of us had experienced the horrors of the wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, we felt that we had to do something even deeper to try to stop the killing. Under Reagan's presidency, his number-one foreign policy objective was to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua by supporting the Contras' attacks.

So we formed the Pledge of Resistance, which organized thousands of people all over the country who signed a pledge saying if the United States escalated the wars in Central America, we would do nonviolent direct action to protest the atrocities the U.S. government was inflicting.

For several years, we were carrying out actions every time Congress voted more money for these wars, and when the United States blockaded the ports of Nicaragua, and when the Jesuit priests were murdered and the nuns were killed in El Salvador. We would have actions where hundreds and hundreds of us would be arrested. Here in San Francisco, we shut down the Federal Building a number of times during those years, and there were protests at federal buildings and military bases all over the country.

Spirit: *Your Nonviolent Movement Building Program played a key role in supporting the Pledge in the Bay Area.*

Hartsough: Our program supported Ken Butigan to work on helping develop the Pledge of Resistance. You and I organized nonviolence trainings for the Pledge, and trained nonviolent trainers. That played a very key role in helping influence the nonviolent spirit and tone of the actions. We funded the Pledge of Resistance nonviolent training handbook and it became a manual for people all around the country. [*Editor's note:* Ken Butigan and Terry Messman were members of AFSC's Nonviolent Movement Building committee and co-authored *Basta: No Mandate for War. A Pledge of Resistance Handbook*]

Spirit: *How would you analyze the effectiveness of the Pledge of Resistance?*

Hartsough: A lot of people that were involved in the Pledge around the country came out of the religious community. Somebody in the White House said at one point, "We could go ahead and overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua if it weren't for these Christians." Meaning the Pledge of Resistance!

We were a formidable force. Every time our government did anything to escalate these wars, they would have people doing sit-ins in Congressional offices, shutting down federal buildings, and marching in the streets, and they'd have to put hundreds of people in jail. That was a real problem for them.

I think the Pledge was an example of American people who were in touch with their consciences, and were willing to put their freedom on the line, and spend time in jail if necessary, to speak out against the horrors that our government was involved in. We desperately need that spirit again as we resist wars in the future.

Spirit: *How did you become involved with Nuremberg Action Group in blocking shipments of weapons to Central America from Concord Naval Weapons Station?*

Hartsough: Brian Willson, Charlie Liteky and members of Veterans for Peace had fasted on the steps of the U.S. Capitol for 40 days to try to stop Congressional support for the wars in Central America. Brian Willson then went on one of the veterans' peace action teams to Nicaragua. When he came back, he was in tears at what he had seen in Nicaragua. The Contras had come across the border to attack communities in Nicaragua, including children's nurseries, cooperative farms and medical clinics. He said, "We've got to do much more to stop this."

Spirit: *The Nuremberg principles were established during the trial of Nazi leaders accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against peace.*

Hartsough: Yes. We called these actions Nuremberg Actions because we felt we were upholding not only God's law, but international law: the Nuremberg principles. So indiscriminately killing innocent men, women and children in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala are crimes against humanity. And to do nothing in the face of those war crimes is to be complicit in those war crimes. So we were upholding international law by trying to stop these arms shipments.

Spirit: *Why did the veterans for peace choose the Concord base to begin upholding the Nuremberg principles?*

Hartsough: Concord Naval Weapons Station was a major shipping point for munitions to Central America, so in 1987, we decided Concord was the place where we needed to hold a blockade. On June 10, 1987, Russ Jorgenson, Dorothy Granada, Wendy Kaufmann and I were arrested for sitting on Port Chicago highway and blocking the first munitions truck at Concord. We spent the weekend in jail.

Then people held a vigil at the Concord base every single day of the entire summer. Brian decided that starting on September 1, 1987, he would begin a fast and block trains carrying munitions. He had written to the Navy and to the press that the government had a choice to either stop the arms shipments to arrest them and take them to jail, or run over them.

Spirit: *So Navy officials had advance notice that Brian and others would be sitting on the train tracks?*

Hartsough: There were three veterans that decided to block the trains on September 1. We had an interfaith worship service and a press conference and then sent a delegation to tell the Navy again that we were going to be blocking the trains. About 11:30 in the morning, after the worship service, the train started moving towards us.

We had a big banner across the tracks saying, "Stopping the War Starts Here: Nuremberg Actions." I was in front of the group looking at the two guys on the train and I was yelling at the top of my voice: "There's people on the tracks. Stop the train!" The train actually hit my arm and knocked me down, just outside the tracks.

Instead of slowing down, the train was picking up speed as it approached Brian Willson and Duncan Murphy and David Duncombe sitting on the tracks. Duncan and David jumped off the tracks. Brian was sitting on the tracks with his legs crossed and the train ran over him. I could see Brian being smashed from one side to another and the train was grinding up his body, with blood spurting everywhere.

As the train passed by, I found one of

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Brian's severed legs with a shoe and went running toward him. There was a big hole in his head, so I put my hand over the hole to try to hold the blood from gushing out. His wife of 10 days, Holly Rauen, was a midwife and had medical training and she was able to put a tourniquet around his leg to stop the blood flow.

The Navy ambulance came and I said to them, "Take this man to the hospital. He's dying." And they said, "We're not allowed to."

Spirit: *That is so heartless. It makes you sick. They were just following orders, like the original Nuremberg defendants.*

Hartsough: So somebody had to run to a pay phone, and it was another 23 minutes before another ambulance came. None of us thought we'd ever see Brian alive again. He went through many hours of surgery. Bones throughout his body were broken, his skull had been fractured, and there was a big hole in his head. One leg was gone and the other had to be amputated.

Luckily after that surgery, he was still alive. When I went to see him in the hospital, he had bandages all over his whole body, and bandages around his face so I could only see his eyes. He was not only alive, but his commitment to nonviolence and his commitment to continuing the struggle at Concord had intensified, if anything. We had decided to have a rally that Saturday to recommit ourselves to stopping the trains and stopping the arms shipments. I asked him if there was anything he'd like to say to the rally, and I recorded his statement.

Brian said, "We have to continue this struggle because these bombs are killing people in Central America, and as soon as I can get out of the hospital, I'll be back there with you."

We had 9,000 people out there at Concord the next Saturday, including Jesse Jackson and Joan Baez and Rosario Ortega, the wife of Daniel Ortega.

We now know it was a decision in Washington, D.C., not to stop the trains, but to essentially scare us into stopping our actions against the war.

Spirit: *Instead of stopping Nuremberg Actions, the Navy's assault on Brian Willson outraged people, and inspired them to come out in more massive numbers than ever before.*

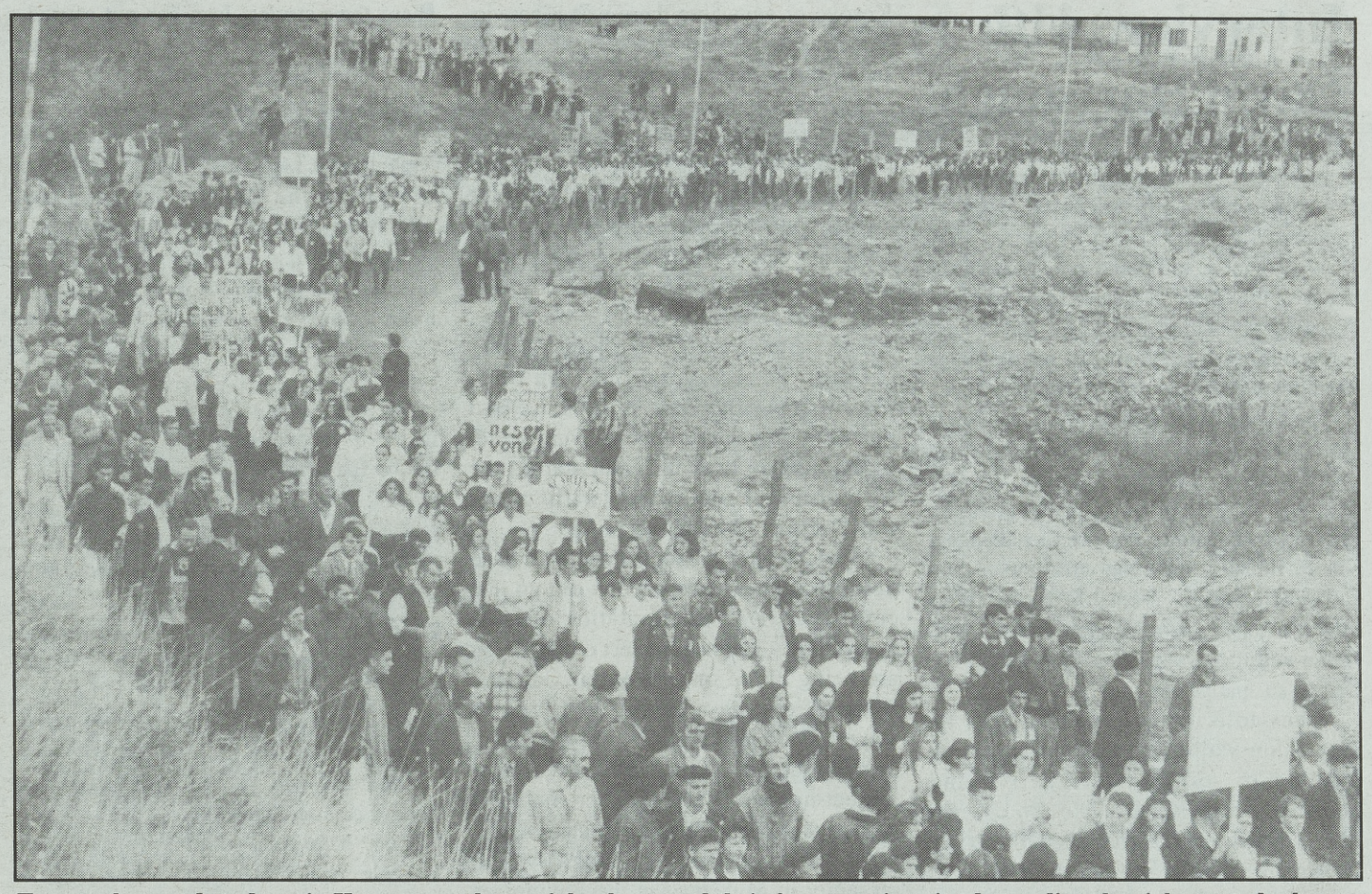
Hartsough: Exactly. For close to three years, the Nuremberg Action Group had people blocking the trains and the trucks every day. Sometimes they would have to arrest two busloads of us to get us off the tracks so they could run their trains and have their war and keep killing people in Central America.

Spirit: *Brian Willson beat all the odds and not only survived, but dedicated his life to working for peace and justice.*

Hartsough: He has spent the rest of his life acting on that belief that we're really all brothers and sisters. And he was a very inspiring example to people all over the world that there are Americans that care enough about the death and destruction that our government is causing that they're willing to put their lives on the line to try to stop it.

Spirit: *Hasn't he become a hero to people in Nicaragua and Central America?*

Hartsough: Yes, to people in Nicaragua and throughout Latin America, and people in Israel and Palestine, and many other countries. He was invited to come everywhere. They wanted to meet this person who really acted on his belief that American lives aren't more important than everybody else's lives, and we have to speak out to stop this madness — not just with words, but with our bodies.



Twenty thousand students in Kosovo march nonviolently toward their former university demanding the right to study there.

Spirit: *One of the most inspiring things I ever saw was on the 25th anniversary of Nuremberg Actions. Brian returned to the Concord base to speak out for peace, then he danced on his prosthetic legs on the same railroad tracks where he had lost his legs.*

Hartsough: Governments have the power to throw us in jail and shoot at us and intimidate us, but they don't have the power to kill our spirits, and they certainly didn't kill Brian's spirit. Our actions at Nuremberg were an example of what people all over this country can do, and have a responsibility to do, if we're to stop our government from fighting one war after another, and causing misery around the world.

Spirit: *Can you remember back to what you felt the very first time you visited Brian in the hospital right after he was run over by the train — but before all that inspiring stuff happened with 9,000 people gathering in solidarity at Concord?*

Hartsough: It was horror, especially that first day when this had just happened. Here we were still at the tracks, and our dear friend had been taken off to the hospital and was presumably going to be dying. Brian and I had talked about doing that first action together, and up until that morning, I was planning to be on the tracks.

But we had an agreement that anyone who would block a train or truck had to go through a nonviolence training first. There were a bunch of people out at the tracks who wanted to block a train, and I was the only person there who could do a training. So I agreed not to block that first train, but to do a nonviolence training and then we would block the next train.

Brian and I had been two of the people that had envisioned and planned and organized this. So I felt tremendous responsibility that I had caused this guy's death. Then, when I found him alive — and his spirits were very much alive even though he was all in bandages and without his legs — there was tremendous joy in my heart that he had survived this.

This developed a very close kinship between the two of us. I realize how, every day since then, Brian has had to suffer. He has suffered from not having his legs, and he had to suffer the physical and psychic pain from that train hitting him. So I've wanted to be supportive of him in every way I can. And we're obviously very, very dear friends. It's inspiring to me to know somebody with as much love in his heart as Brian has for all the people in the world.

Spirit: *It can be costly to resist war crimes. The Concord police also began using torturous pain holds to remove nonviolent demonstrators from the tracks.*

Hartsough: Yes. Three of us had our arms broken by police using pain holds in November of 1987 — Rev. David Wylie, Jean Bakewell and I. I was kneeling on the tracks when the weapons train was approaching, and the sheriff's deputy told me I had to get off the tracks because the train was coming. I said, "I'll be happy to get off the tracks when you stop shipping arms to kill people."

So he grabbed my arm and began twisting it, and when it got so painful I had to get up and start walking with him. I walked about 20 feet, and he said, "This is to make sure you get off the tracks next time." Then he gave my arm another twist and broke it. I went unconscious.

Spirit: *Didn't the three of you win a lawsuit that barred the police from using these pain holds?*

Hartsough: It was not just pain holds, but they were breaking bones. The ACLU decided to sue them and it was finally settled out of court because the government didn't want to go to trial. But they agreed to give $50,000 to cover our medical expenses. I gave my part of it to Witness for Peace and Peace Brigades International. The most important part of the settlement was an agreement on the part of the Sheriff's Department in Contra Costa County not to use violence against nonviolent demonstrators.

Spirit: *You went on several marches with the Occupy movement in Oakland and San Francisco, and you also helped organize forums where the issue of nonviolence in Occupy was debated. On a march to the Port of Oakland, you said that Occupy was the most remarkable movement you had been involved in. Why did you think that then, and what do you think of its significance in retrospect?*

Hartsough: I think the Occupy movement was a tremendous outpouring of people throughout this country in resistance to the terrible inequality of this nation. Instead of a democracy of, by and for the people, we have a plutocracy — a government of, by and for the rich and the corporations.

In hundreds of cities across the United States, people tried to stop business as usual, and demanded that our country get back to its basic values and principles.

I think like all other social movements, in order to have a chance, you have to build a mass movement, and you have to be willing to put your lives on the line, blocking the banks and challenging the corporations that are stealing our democracy. And you have to keep marching even if the police say it's illegal.

And all that was happening. And the spirit among the people that were part of that movement was absolutely overwhelming. It did bring together homeless people and students and old people and labor unions and religious communities. I think we had tremendous potential and I hope we still do.

Spirit: *How do you understand the swift rise and sudden fall of Occupy?*

Hartsough: I think the federal government decided it was a threat to have tens of thousands of people marching and camping out in the parks and challenging the unjust institutions so dramatically. So they decided to come down very, very heavy on the Occupy movement. Partly, it had gotten to be winter and people were cold and wet and tired. I think it was a weakness, if you will, that we allowed ourselves to be intimidated by the government repression and the violent tactics by the police when they cleared the encampments and arrested people.

Fear and repression is the Achilles' heel of any movement, and almost all governments will use fear as a way of controlling people. Unfortunately, we didn't have the understanding and commitment to realize that was what the government was doing, and not let them get the upper hand.

But I think the Occupy movement does continue to live and those people have not just disappeared. Occupy people are challenging foreclosures around the country. They're still there and working in many smaller, less visible ways. I still think a powerful nonviolent movement can be resurrected and turn this country around.

Spirit: *Tell me about the events that led to your working with activists in Bosnia and then your arrest in Kosovo.*

Hartsough: In 1996, I went to Bosnia with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and that was right after the shelling of Sarajevo had ended. We saw literally hundreds of cemeteries all over Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, all with fresh graves from that war.

In Kosovo, more than 90 percent of the people were Albanians, and they were being ruled by less than 10 percent of the

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people who were Serbs. It was an apartheid country. Many Albanians had lost their jobs, and could not study in the university. Instead of getting guns and turning to armed struggle, they were choosing nonviolent means to challenge that oppression and that apartheid regime.

So I decided to go there and I met Adem Demaci, who had spent 29 years in prison, very much like Nelson Mandela. He was the head of the human rights commission there. I met students that were challenging their exclusion from the university. I met political prisoners, women's organizations and teachers. I spent a couple months with them and they were all saying they were facing an apartheid regime.

They told me that Kosovo was an explosion waiting to happen, and they wanted to form a more active and assertive nonviolent struggle. To do that, they needed international people to come to Kosovo and be present with them to make it safer. They asked me to find international people to come and help them engage in nonviolent struggle.

When I went back to Kosovo with a small group of American students in the spring of 1998, hundreds of thousands of people were marching in the streets — everything from young families with their babies in strollers, to old people with their canes. Yet, the massive protests barely got any publicity in the rest of the world.

I began doing nonviolence trainings of the students, which they had asked for, and the next day, all five of us Americans were put in prison, and we got major publicity for our arrests around the world. It was kind of ridiculous because hundreds of thousands of people marching nonviolently were ignored, while five internationals who got arrested for trying to support these folks got all this publicity.

Spirit: *How long were you held and what were conditions like in the jail?*

Hartsough: We were sentenced to 10 days in jail, but after the third day, there had been so much publicity around the world that they came to the jail and took us to the Macedonian border and stamped in our passports that we couldn't come back for ten years. We used the publicity to try to bring attention to the nonviolent struggle in Kosovo and the need to support it.

The conditions in jail were terrible. It was very cold, and there was no heat. They had shaved our heads. There were a hundred rules posted on the wall and the first rule said: "Obey all the rules." It was pretty harsh and inhumane.

Then, in 1999, when some more ethnic cleansing had started, President Clinton went on international television and said we have two choices: We can look the other way and do nothing, or we can go in and start bombing. From my perspective, neither of those alternatives are acceptable. We had a third alternative, which our country and the world had refused to take, and that was to support the nonviolent struggle. That was a terrible lost opportunity. If we had done that, I think we had a good chance to help make that transition to a more democratic society happen peacefully, rather than through a horrendous war. The hatred that exists now between people in Kosovo and the Serbs will last for generations. And that's what happens in every war.

Spirit: *Is that what led to your work with the Nonviolent Peaceforce?*

Hartsough: That experience was the impetus to start the Nonviolent Peaceforce. I realized we needed hundreds of trained, nonviolent peacekeepers — courageous people that could go to Kosovo or anywhere there was a nonviolent struggle to help support those folks to successfully challenge oppression.

In the spring of 1999, the Hague Appeal for Peace was happening in the Netherlands where 9,000 peace activists from all over the world came together to look at how we could end war. So a number of us who were at the Hague Appeal committed ourselves to building a global nonviolent peace force.

We started a two-year process of sharing this vision with people from other parts of the world. Then, in 2002, we held our founding conference in Surajkund, India, outside of Delhi, and started the Nonviolent Peaceforce, with peace activists from 49 countries present.

We now have a couple hundred trained international peacekeepers that can go into conflict areas at the invitation of local peacemakers, and help protect civilians that are being killed or injured in conflicts. About 80 percent of the people that die in wars and armed conflicts are civilians, many of them children. We're also there to protect human rights workers and local peacemakers whose lives are endangered.

We have been in Sri Lanka. We're presently in Mindanao in the Philippines where there has been a decades-long struggle between the government military and the Muslim community. We're also in South Sudan which is in tremendous upheaval right now, and we're starting a project in Burma where there are still some major conflicts.

Spirit: *What was your role in developing the Nonviolent Peaceforce?*

Hartsough: Mel Duncan and I were seen as the cofounders of the Nonviolent Peaceforce. We were seen as the people who really took this vision and continued to reach out to people all around the world to help bring this vision into being. I was the strategic relations director and was responsible for reaching out to organizations and groups all around the world.

We wanted the Nonviolent Peaceforce to not just be a group of North Americans. We wanted this to be truly a global force of people from all over the world. Both our decision-making body and our volunteers on the ground are really a mixture of people and races and nationalities from the whole world.

Spirit: *This idea seems to build on the work of groups like Witness for Peace and Peace Brigades International.*

Hartsough: Yes, I started the Friends Peace Teams, and had worked with Peace Brigades International and Witness for Peace, and saw that nonviolent peace teams can have a very important impact, and we wanted to expand this.

Gandhi first envisioned a Shanti Sena, or nonviolent army, so this idea has been kicking around for a long time. And it was very exciting to actually find the people in different parts of the world who wanted to realize this vision of Mahatma Gandhi.

Today, the United Nations and many friendly governments are beginning to understand the power of nonviolent peacekeeping as an alternative to armed peacekeeping. Our hope eventually is to have this seen as an alternative to war and violent intervention.

Spirit: *Have you led peacemaking delegations to countries in the Middle East?*

Hartsough: I have led two peace delegations to Iran, and one to Israel and Palestine in the last four or five years. Bush called Iran part of the Axis of Evil, and these countries were seen as the ultimate enemies. So what we were really doing was just getting to know the Iranian people as people. When you know people, it's very hard to think about killing them or blowing up their society.

We met with members of Parliament and religious leaders and all kinds of people in the country, and then came back to share their stories. Iran has not started a war with another country in 200 years. The United States overthrew their democratically elected government in 1953.

[*Editor:* Iranian Prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh was overthrown in 1953 by the United States in a coup after he nationalized Iran's oil industry.]

The U.S. also shot down a civilian airliner and never apologized for that. We have troops and bombers surrounding their country, and yet we see them as a threat to us. That reality motivated us to try to stop a war with Iran, and to get our nation to resolve its conflicts at the negotiation table, not on the battlefield.

Spirit: *What happened on your peace delegation to Israel and Palestine?*

Hartsough: Scott Kennedy and I led a delegation to Israel and Palestine in 2009-2010. What most influenced me is that, similar to Kosovo, there is a very broad-based movement, especially in the West Bank, where Palestinians have been challenging the wall, and challenging their apartheid system where they are treated as second-class citizens.

They have been resorting to nonviolent struggle, but unfortunately, Israel has not responded very positively to that nonviolent struggle. And there are also many Israelis that are very committed to justice for Palestinians, and are actually joining in weekly nonviolent demonstrations across the West Bank. It is important to try to bring this to light for the rest of the world.

This is a nonviolent movement where, week after week, people are marching to the walls that are separating their communities from their fields, and they are being tear-gassed and shot with rubber bullets. And there are Israelis from the religious community called Rabbis for Human Rights that are supporting them and acting in solidarity with them.

Israel is using massive bombing and a total blockade and locking the borders so people can't get in or out — all in an effort to try to find security. It is exactly the opposite of what is needed. The only real peace that can be created there is a peace where there is a sense of justice, and where every person is respected for their religious beliefs and nationality.

Spirit: *It is fascinating to me that, after a lifetime of being involved in many idealistic campaigns for peace, instead of becoming more "practical" or "realistic," you are now involved in perhaps your most utopian campaign of all — a World Beyond War. Is there any real hope of abolishing warfare?*

Hartsough: It's called World Beyond War: A Global Movement to End All Wars. The overwhelming numbers of people in the world do not benefit because of war, and are suffering because of war. Our governments continue this anachronistic practice of fighting wars because that's how they think they'll get security.

We know that wars are not working. Wars are bankrupting us. Trillions of dollars are being wasted on wars and preparation for wars. And that forces the governments to cut funds for every social program and from schools and environmental programs and parks and homeless programs and low-income housing and programs for the elderly and children.

Spirit: *How are peace activists building this movement to abolish war?*

Hartsough: We have over 4,000 people who have signed a Declaration of Peace. [This is available at www.worldbeyondwar.org.] We have 68 countries where people have signed the Declaration of Peace. People who have signed this declaration are committed to not engage in or support wars of any kind and to work nonviolently to end all wars.

We have committees that are working on strategy, fundraising, outreach, nonviolent training, and the use of social media. We have people doing the research to document that wars are not working and that there are viable alternatives to war right now. The campaign is still in its initial stages. We have to do a tremendous amount of education not only among peace people, but all the groups that could benefit by ending war.

Ending war is possible if the people of the world realize that those of us who want peace are the massive majority, and we have to force our governments to listen to us. We need to challenge our governments to stop this nonsense, and if they don't listen to us, we will engage in massive nonviolent resistance.

Spirit: *You have recently written a book about your lifetime work for peace and justice. Can you tell us about it?*

Hartsough: My book is *Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Lifelong Activist*. It shares my experiences with nonviolent movements over the last 60 years. I think that we all need to be inspired by the stories of people that have been engaging in nonviolent resistance around the world.

Hopelessness is maybe our greatest enemy. So people end up feeling disempowered, and that there's nothing we can do to change things. In this book, I'm trying to challenge that sense of hopelessness and powerlessness. The status quo wants us to believe that we're powerless and that we're nobodies.

But people in the Philippines, in Liberia, in Eastern Europe, in Tunisia, in Egypt, and in many other parts of the world understand that they're not powerless, and that nonviolent struggle is the most effective means to challenge oppressive governments. This book shares my own experiences with nonviolent movements that have made an enormous difference in changing the world.

Spirit: *In light of your involvement in countless social-change movements, what are the three movements that you found to be the most inspiring?*

Hartsough: I would say the Civil Rights movement in this country, the Occupy movement, and the movement against the Vietnam War.

Spirit: *Why do these three movements stand out as the most extraordinary?*

Hartsough: During the movement to end the Vietnam war, communities all across this country — churches and labor unions, university and high school students, women's groups — decided that the war in Vietnam was a lie and was killing millions of people in our name and with our tax dollars, and they were going to have to stop it. That same commitment is what we have to create again in the World Beyond War movement today.

The Civil Rights movement started with one woman, Rosa Parks, in Montgomery, Alabama. It started with four students in Greensboro, North Carolina. Both of those actions were sparks that ignited people all over the South, and then eventually people all over the country, to stop the insanity of segregation and second-class citizenship. People put their own lives on the line to create a society that could truly be called a just and democratic society. Those sparks ignited a whole movement of thousands of people willing to risk arrest and violence.

The Occupy movement was a real sign of hope. Occupy was the most recent of these movements and, again, it was sparked by people at the grass roots of our society. People saw a totally serious flaw in our society. They saw that the government is really being controlled by the rich and the corporations while ignoring the well-being of the people. We've got to take back our government for the people and the Occupy movement was trying to do that. It was inspiring that so many people left their comfortable homes and went out on the streets and acted to get this country back on track.

A Journey of Peace in Korea and Vietnam

by David Hartsough

During his recent trip to Vietnam, David Hartsough met mothers and children suffering from the effects of Agent Orange.

The U.S. military dropped more than eight million tons of bombs on Vietnam — more bombs than were dropped by all sides in World War II. The people of Vietnam are still suffering and dying from the unexploded ordnance and the Agent Orange dropped on Vietnam by the United States during the war.

I recently returned from three weeks in Korea and Vietnam, countries still suffering from the ravages of war. North and South Korea are caught in the tragic Cold War mentality with a divided country imposed on them by the United States back in 1945 and solidified in 1948. Ten million families were separated by the division into North and South Korea.

People in South Korea cannot phone, write or visit relatives or friends in North Korea and vice versa. One Catholic priest from South Korea I met spent three-and-a-half years in prison in South Korea for visiting North Korea on a peace mission.

The border between North and South Korea is a battle zone where hot war could break out at any moment. The U.S. and South Korean military regularly conduct full-scale, live-fire war games involving up to 300,000 troops simulating both defensive and offensive war, including armed war planes right up to the border of North Korea. North Korea regularly makes threats of war as well.

The Soviet Union is no more and it is time for the United States to ask forgiveness of the people of South and North Korea for imposing this state of war on the two countries, sign a peace agreement with North Korea to officially end the Korean war, recognize the government of North Korea and agree to negotiate all differences at the conference table, not on the battlefield.

Resistance on Jeju Island

I spent most of my time in Korea on Jeju Island, a beautiful island 50 miles south of the South Korean mainland where between 30,000 and 80,000 people were assassinated back in 1948 under orders from U.S. military command. The people of Jeju Island had strongly resisted the Japanese occupation during World War II and, along with most people in Korea, were looking forward to a free and independent nation.

However, instead of a unified country, the United States imposed a strongly anti-communist government on South Korea. Especially on Jeju Island, all who resisted a militarized and anti-communist South Korea were assassinated.

Because of the anti-communist dictatorships in power for decades after 1948, the people of Jeju Island were not allowed to even talk about this past or they would be suspected of being communist sympathizers and severely punished.

Only in 2003, President Roh Moo-hyun apologized on behalf of the Korean government for the massacre of the people on Jeju Island in 1948. Jeju Island was then declared an "Island of Peace" and was also declared a "World Heritage Site" because of its coral reefs and natural beauty.

But now the U.S. government has decided on the "pivot to Asia" and plans to move the focus of U.S. military operations to Asia, presumably to encircle China with military bases and prepare for the next war. The village of Gangjeong has been chosen as the port for a massive military base which officially will be a Korean military base, but in reality is seen as a place for U.S. military ships to help "contain" China. Thus, the fear is that Jeju Island could become a focal point for a new war.

Since plans for the base were first announced seven years ago, the people of Gangjeong have been resisting the construction of the base and for the past four years, they have been nonviolently blocking bulldozers and cement trucks coming onto the base. Activists from South Korea (many in the Catholic church) have joined in this nonviolent resistance.

Every day there is a Catholic Mass in which priests and nuns block the main entrance to the base. They are then carried off by the police when many cement trucks are lined up trying to get onto the base. When the police step aside after the trucks have entered the base, the priests and nuns carry their chairs back to continue blocking the entrance to the base — all the time in deep prayer.

I joined them for the last two days I was on Jeju Island. After the mass each day which lasts about two hours, the activists come and do a dance blocking the main gate for another hour or so. Some of the people acting on their conscience blocking the entrance have spent over one year in prison. Others have had heavy fines imposed on them for their acts of conscience. But still the nonviolent resistance continues.

Some Koreans are working hard for reconciliation and peace between North and South Korea. But the governments of the United States, South Korea and North Korea continue their military confrontation. And now, if this base is built, there will be another very large military base in South Korea. Concerned Americans need to support the nonviolent movement of the people on Jeju Island to stop the construction of the military base there.

I believe that the American people need to demand that our government stop the Pax Americana way of relating to the rest of the world. We need to settle our differences with China, North Korea and all nations by negotiations at the conference table, not through projecting our military power through threats and the building of more military bases.

And now on to Vietnam. In April of this year, I spent two weeks in Vietnam as part of a Veterans for Peace delegation hosted by a group of American veterans living in Vietnam. The focus of our visit was to learn about how the people of Vietnam continue to suffer from the American war in Vietnam which ended 39 years ago.

I encountered the friendliness of the Vietnamese people who welcomed us, invited us into their homes, and have forgiven us for all the suffering, pain and death our country inflicted on them in the American war in Vietnam, with a hope that we can live in peace with one another.

I reflected on the horrendous suffering, pain and death caused by the war in Vietnam. If the United States had abided by the Geneva accords which ended the French war with Vietnam in 1954 and had allowed free elections in all of Vietnam in 1956, three million Vietnamese would not have had to die in the American war in Vietnam. Two million of those who died were Vietnamese civilians.

The U.S. military dropped more than eight million tons of bombs on Vietnam — more bombs than were dropped by all sides in World War II — killing, maiming and forcing people to flee their homes and forcing many of them to live in tunnels. In Quang Tri province, four tons of bombs were dropped for every person in that province, the equivalent of eight Hiroshima-sized atomic bombs.

The people of Vietnam are still suffering and dying from the unexploded ordnance and the Agent Orange dropped on Vietnam by the United States during the war. Ten percent of the bombs dropped on Vietnam did not explode on impact and are still exploding in people's back yards, in their fields and in their communities, causing people of all ages, including many children, to lose their limbs, eyesight or be killed or otherwise maimed.

An estimated 800,000 tons of unexploded ordnance is still in the ground in Vietnam. Since the end of the war, at least 42,000 people have lost their lives and another 62,000 have been injured or permanently disabled due to unexploded bombs.

More than 20 million gallons of herbicides were sprayed on the Vietnamese people and countryside, including 15 million gallons of Agent Orange, to defoliate the trees and crops. There are three million Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange with deformed bodies and minds who are still suffering from this highly toxic chemical three generations later. Agent Orange gets into the genes and is passed from generation to generation so children are still being born deformed in mind and body.

We visited orphanages of children tragically affected by Agent Orange who will never be able to live a normal life. We visited homes where children were lying on the bed or floor, not able to control their bodies or even recognize that people were nearby. A mother or grandmother spends 24 hours a day with the child, loving and comforting them. It was almost more than our hearts could bear.

The (American) Veterans for Peace Chapter 160 in Vietnam is helping support projects like Project Renew in which the Vietnamese are trained to safely remove or detonate bombs or other explosives found in their communities. They are also supporting the Vietnam Friendship Village and orphanages and families where one or more family members cannot work by buying them a cow or putting a roof on their home or helping start enterprises that can generate income for the family.

Our delegation contributed $21,000 toward the orphanages and in support of families suffering from Agent Orange and unexploded explosives — a drop in the bucket compared with the need, but it was deeply appreciated.

The U.S. government should take responsibility for alleviating the suffering and pain our war is still causing the people of Vietnam and contribute the hundreds of millions of dollars necessary to clean up both the Agent Orange and unexploded ordnance and support the families

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Youth Spirit Artworks and Prop 47

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young people are able to express their passions and their concerns for social justice. For some months now, they have been engaged in the subject of prisons and all that is associated with them.

It all came about when J.R. Furst dropped in at the YSA studio. Furst, age 30, is an artist, musician, street performer and writer. "Art is sort of like my salvation," he says.

Furst explains how he "gravitated toward letter writing" and has connected with many pen pals. He recalls seeing the movie "Hurricane" about Ruben "Hurricane" Carter, "a boxer who was sent to prison for a murder he didn't commit and a young man writes to him."

Furst says, "That stuck in my head. I went to this website called writeaprisoner.com." He now has five incarcerated pen pals. One of those five, Glen Robinson, made a profound impression on him.

"He has a very powerful message," Furst says. "From the beginning is his strong desire and pledge to be of service to the community and to find a level of transcendence. He's there (in jail) 24 hours a day with the ghost of the past, but the powerful part is not victimization and self-pity. He really dug deep on some level of acceptance."

For two years, he has been corresponding with Robinson and saving all his letters. He set up a website, beyondthisprison.com connecting specifically with Glen Robinson, and a project he calls Beyond This Prison for "bringing out his themes and ideas in the community and creating art based on that."

Seeking to involve young people, Furst approached Youth Spirit Artworks with the project and found they were interested. He brought them some of Robinson's letters and it lit a spark with the youth.

Furst said it was very meaningful to see the young people of YSA respond intently to Robinson's letters. "They often say he's saying things that I'm experiencing that I didn't have words for," Furst says. Several began their own correspondence with Robinson.

YSA Executive Director Sally Hindman and Art Director Victor Mavedzenge decided that the summer would be devoted to the Beyond This Prison Project, "making art on the topic of freedom and imprisonment." It would tie in with the campaign for Proposition 47.

They decided to work on "art actions," which will be flash exhibits at local malls where they will pass out literature about the ballot initiative.

Teacher and artist Mavedzenge explains, "What this project aims to do is to make the youth reflect on what freedom means to them. So the whole concept of freedom can be looked at from a lot of different angles, but when you consider the fact that some people go to jail for minor crimes such as stealing diapers, then the whole question becomes: why did somebody have to steal diapers?

"It's such a basic necessity and they get a jail record for that. This is why we support Proposition 47. So within this project, we then question what is it that led people to be in a situation that limits their freedom, like being in prison. And it all boils down to the economic situation we're living in. People of color have been subjected to less opportunity, stigmatization, police brutality. So many things have gone on in the community that has affected people's freedom."

Mavedzenge refers to the correspondence with Robinson whose writings have inspired the youth. "He writes to us about his reflections about what life means. What does it mean to be on the street and dealing and hustling and living a life of crime to survive? And these reflections really have told us to look into ourselves and ask what life is all about."

Mavedzenge recites one of his favorite quotes from Robinson's letters: "The mask we wear to fool others is the same mask we wear to fool ourselves." One of the young artists at YSA, Brendon Harris, used this quotation on his painting.

According to Mavedzenge, it is important for the young artists to see "these reflections from somebody who is in prison calling out to the youth to say, 'Do not walk the road I walked.' There are better choices to be made — no matter what circumstance you are under."

Approaching the subject of Prop. 47 and incarceration from the aspect of freedom, Mavedzenge invited the young people to write short statements on "what freedom means to me." He received some thoughtful and inspiring responses. We quote a few short excerpts.

Julia Tello observed that, "We cannot truly exercise our freedom until we allow everyone to be free, and most important, free ourselves."

She also said, "Here at Youth Spirit Artworks, I'm trying to incorporate what I think freedom means in my art, as well as trying to spread the awareness of how people are taking others' freedom away."

Georgina Woodlaw works with Youth Spirit Artworks. She said she loves working with color. She calls her painting, "Abstract of a Lady." Lydia Gans photo

"When freedom comes to the mind, it makes me think about the Black Panthers or the Civil Rights movement," wrote Zayfi RA Ashe. On another note, he said, "Possessing freedom in your imagination helps you create things that you never thought you could ever do, and in that process you might become an inspiration to more people."

Georgina Woodlaw wrote, "Freedom to me means free of judgment to express yourself in life — not to judge people — be caring, kind to one another." Referring to her participation in the Beyond This Prison project, she added, "I also think the prison project helped me through with writing my dad more while he's in jail."

Michael Blanco got straight to the point. "The system we live by is flawed. That's why 38 percent of the prison population is Black and 21 percent of the prison population is Hispanic. That's why I get butterflies and cold sweats when I see an enforcer of the law. A man that is supposed to by my savior becomes my tormentor."

The art that the young people have created over the summer on the YSA Beyond This Prison program is impressive. Talent and inspiration and a dedicated teacher have produced an exhibit that is a pleasure to view and carries an important message as well. Calling it Front Line Art, they will be taking it to 10 locations in the area and distributing flyers supporting Proposition 47. They expect to start in mid-September.

To learn more about getting involved in Youth Spirit Artworks or supporting YSA's work to pass Prop. 47, email shindman@youthspiritartworks.org or call 510-282-0396. YSA always needs new volunteers, including Board members and other volunteers! Also, YSA hopes you will "Like" Youth Spirit Artworks on Facebook!!!"

Journey of Peace in Korea and Vietnam

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and victims still suffering from the war.

The Vietnamese are ready to do the work, but need financial assistance. We Americans have caused this tragedy. We have the moral responsibility to clean it up.

It was powerful to experience Vietnam in the company of U.S. veterans who had been part of the killing and destruction during the war and who are now finding healing from the pain of their war experiences 40 or more years ago, through reaching out to the people of Vietnam who are still suffering from the war.

One U.S. veteran told us that after the war, he could not live with himself or with anyone else, and lived as far away as he could from other people — about a hundred miles north of Anchorage, Alaska. He said he worked on an oil pipeline by day, and was drunk or high on drugs the rest of the time to escape from the pain of his war experience. He said there were hundreds of other veterans also living in the backwoods of Alaska who were going through the same experience.

Only after enduring 30 years of hell did he finally decide to go back to Vietnam. Now he has gotten to know the people of Vietnam and has found profound healing for himself. He said the worst decision of his life was to go to Vietnam as a soldier and the best decision was to come back to Vietnam as a friend of the people of Vietnam.

A bill has passed Congress allocating $66 million to commemorate the war in Vietnam in 2015, the 40th anniversary of the end of the war. Many in Washington hope to clean up the image of the war in Vietnam by showing that it was a "good war" and something for which Americans should be proud.

After my recent trip to Vietnam, I feel very strongly that we must *not* allow our government to clean up the image of the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was a horrible war, as are all wars. Hopefully we will learn from history, as well as from our religious teachings, that war is not the answer. War does not solve conflicts, but instead sows the seeds of future wars.

War is a moral disaster for everyone, including those who do the killing. There is a very high number of suicides by both active-duty soldiers and veterans, and the souls of all the rest of us are also wounded.

The United States could be the most loved nation in the world if we moved from our Pax Americana way of relating to the world to a worldview of a global human family. We need to work for shared security for all people on earth and act on that belief by spending the hundreds of billions we currently spend on wars and preparation for wars for human and environmental needs in the United States and worldwide.

We could help end world hunger, and help build schools and medical clinics in communities around the world. We could help build a decent life for every person on the planet. That would be a much more effective means of fighting terrorism than our present effort to find security through ever more armaments, nuclear weapons and military bases circling our planet.

I invite you to join many of us who are building a Global Movement to End All War. Go to www.worldbeyondwar.org and sign the Declaration of Peace. Look at the ten-minute video and become active in this movement to end the addiction to violence and war which is so endemic in this country and around the world.

I believe that 99% of the world's people could benefit and feel much safer and have a much better quality of life if we were to end our addiction to war as a means of resolving conflicts and devote those funds to promoting a better life for all people on the planet.

My experiences in Korea and Vietnam have only strengthened my belief that this is the path we must take if we are to survive as a species and build a world of peace and justice for our children and grandchildren and for all generations to come.

For more information about the struggle on Jeju Island, Korea, see the www.savejejunow.org website and the film, "Ghosts of Jeju."

For more information about Vietnam and what the Veterans for Peace are doing to help support those suffering from Agent Orange and unexploded ordnance, see http://vfp-vn.ning.com/

To find out more about the Movement to End All War, see www.worldbeyondwar.org.